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WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

A RECORD OF NINETY YEARS

William Orne White

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

A RECORD OF NINETY YEARS

EDITED BY

ELIZA ORNE WHITE

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO MY SISTER

ROSE WHITE NEAD

PREFACE

In the introduction to his matchless *Life of Alice Freeman Palmer*, Professor Palmer says: "To leave the dead wholly dead is rude."

It is this feeling that has impelled me to get together these letters of my father's. His personality was so striking, his individuality had so unique a touch, and his influence was so great upon those with whom he came in contact in his quiet life, while the records I had to draw from were so full, that I could not bear to let silence close around him, if anything I could do would help to perpetuate his memory.

My father was a faithful and beloved pastor in a country parish for twenty-seven years, and during his long life through a vital period in our history he took a keen interest, not only in national affairs, but in all the public matters which related to the welfare of the community in which he lived.

In making the extracts from his letters I have chosen many passages that show his lighter side; for no sketch of my father would be complete that

did not show the racy love of fun which helped to light up the graver side of his character. His deep faith and spiritual outlook made him a help in time of trouble, while with his perennial sense of humor he was a stimulating and delightful companion in the everyday affairs of life.

The world is so rapidly changing that I have felt that these annals in the life of a country minister in the middle years of the nineteenth century will have a certain historic value for us of to-day.

ELIZA ORNE WHITE

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
January 3, 1917.

CONTENTS

I. Childhood — 1821–1831 1

II. Exeter Academy — 1835–1836 15

III. Harvard College — 1836–1840 28

IV. Europe and the Divinity School — 1840–1845 51

V. Eastport and St. Louis — 1846–1847 . . 66

VI. Marriage and West Newton — 1848–1850 . 89

VII. Early Years in Keene — 1851–1861 . . 96

VIII. The Civil War — 1861–1865 143

IX. Letters to a Child — 1860–1866 184

X. Later Years in Keene — 1866–1876 . . . 197

XI. Europe and Last Year in Keene — 1871–1878 220

XII. From Sixty to Ninety — 1881–1911 . . . 248

Index 277

ILLUSTRATIONS

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From a photograph

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE 54
From a painting by Thomas Badger in 1840

MARGARET ELIOT WHITE 98
From a painting by Chester Harding in 1849

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE 250
From a painting by Ellen Day Hale in 1909

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

A RECORD OF NINETY YEARS

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

1821–1831

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE was born on the 12th of February, 1821, a birthday which had been appropriated some years earlier by Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin. He was the son of Daniel Appleton White, judge of the Probate Court in Salem, Massachusetts. His mother, whose maiden name was Eliza Orne, died a few weeks after his birth, and he used to say he supposed her friends thought it a pity that the child survived the mother. And yet the frail little baby was destined to struggle through a delicate childhood and youth and reach a hardy old age, finding an ever-increasing zest in life, which he enjoyed as few people do, until the time of his last illness, which shadowed his final year.

He was seventh in descent from William White, who came over from England in 1635 and landed in Ipswich, Massachusetts, removing to Haverhill in 1640, where he lived a long and useful life, dying at the age of eighty in 1690. He was also seventh in descent on his mother's side from John Horne, the name being changed to Orne in the next generation. There was a tradition in the family that the Hornes came from Holland and were descendants of Count Horne who was executed with Count Egmont.

John Horne also lived to a good old age, dying when he was eighty-two, in 1685. William Orne White's grandfather, William Orne, was a prominent merchant of Salem, Massachusetts, and the first to send a ship to Brazil from that port. He married Abigail Ropes, daughter of Judge Ropes of Salem, who held his position under the English Crown at the time of the breaking-out of the Revolution. He had to decide whether to be loyal to his king or to his country. The stanch old Tory decided in favor of his king, and the windows of his house were broken by stones that were thrown by the patriot mob as he lay dying. The house is still standing on Essex Street in Salem. It is known as the Ropes Memorial and is open on certain

afternoons to the public. Here one can picture the loyalist judge as he sat at his desk in one of his Chippendale chairs, with his Sheffield plate candlesticks on the mantelpiece, in those days when the very furniture took on a grace of line that must have added to the daily pleasure of living. One can imagine him as he lay ill in his four-poster bed in the southeast chamber, while the mob threw stones against his windows. His daughter Abigail, who married William Orne, was of so rare and lovely a character that her father once said that she had never done or said a thing which he wanted to change. The mantle of her feminine charm — for goodness alone could not have elicited such a compliment from a father — evidently descended on her only daughter, Eliza Orne, for all who knew her felt the warmest affection for her.

In the relic room of the Ropes Memorial there is a silhouette of Eliza Orne, — Mrs. Wetmore, as she was then, — taken shortly before her marriage to Judge White. It is a charming profile, spirited, if not regularly pretty. I have an earlier silhouette of her in my possession. It is a piquant face, and with the hair worn with a high comb behind, and a few waving tendrils about the forehead, and a dress cut down in a point in front with a little frill

about the neck, the picture might stand as a portrait of gracious girlhood for all time.

She was married at the age of twenty to William Wetmore, and when still very young she was left a widow. It was many years later, on August 1, 1819, that she married Daniel Appleton White and, after a brief year and a half of happiness, she died on March 27, 1821, in the thirty-seventh year of her age. But if she lived so brief a time there was the compensation of having those few years filled with affection, and with the sorrows and joys that make life a rich experience. She must have had a warm and loving nature, for her two young stepdaughters were passionately devoted to her. After her death, the eldest, Elizabeth Amelia, wanted to be called Eliza, and when she was an old woman she used to tell her niece, Eliza, of those early days when their lonely house was brightened by the new mother, who sat by the parlor window in the lamplight every evening, watching eagerly for her husband's return. One of his brothers, who was a farmer, used to say how welcome she made him feel when he came to the house, with her simple cordiality, as she said, "I am so glad to see you, brother John." She was evidently a great reader, for there is a bookcase with its shelves filled with

books containing her name, ranging from volumes of sermons and a set of Shakespeare to Mrs. Glass's Cookery Book. Not only was she loved by the friends of her own class, but by the poor, and it is recorded that at her funeral there was a pathetic woman in shabby black whom she had once befriended, bowed with grief and shaking with sobs.

Although my father could not remember his mother, he always tenderly cherished her memory and she had a very great influence over his life. I have spoken of his ancestors because it is interesting to trace the qualities of heart and mind which they gave him. On many occasions he had the same unflinching spirit in standing out for the right as he saw it, that was shown by his loyalist great-grandfather, while from his mother he inherited various traits, among them the power of winning and keeping affection.

It was a composite household into which William was born. Judge White had first married Mary Wilder Van Schalkwyck, but she died four years after her marriage, leaving two daughters, Elizabeth Amelia and Mary Wilder, who were twelve and ten years older than William. After the death of his mother, my father's cousin, Amelia White,

came to keep house for her uncle, and lived with him until her marriage, which occurred before the little boy was three years old. He was devoted to her and remembered her marriage as the tragedy of his childhood. He used to describe the scene even towards the end of his life, his memory going back eighty-six years, to the time when he saw his beautiful cousin standing up to be married to the Reverend William B. O. Peabody, whom he regarded as a fierce brigand, because one of the servants had told him that Mr. Peabody had come to take his cousin Amelia away. He passionately wished that he were old enough to fight him and keep his beloved cousin all to himself. In a letter written long afterwards he says: "Her wedding was the great sorrow of my childhood, standing out in my memory from everything else in those few years."

When William was three years old his father married Ruth Hurd Rogers (January 22, 1824), the widow of his most intimate friend. Her daughter, Emily Rogers, who was seven years older than William, was like a real sister; while a brother, Henry Orne White, born December 6, 1824, completed the family.

All who knew them during those early years

speak of the delightful atmosphere in the Salem home, and of the way in which these diverse elements were welded into a peculiarly congenial household by my grandfather, whom all his children revered and loved. The relations between William and his new mother were from the first unusually cordial. In writing to her many years after, he says:—

"Your recalling nothing, moreover, that is not agreeable about my childhood may fairly, I think, be due in good measure to your not seeking any occasions for discipline. With some solemn talks, I associate my sister Eliza, who was also so true a friend, and with some sharp discipline, my dear good father, but I cannot recall thus coming in collision with you. You, doubtless, at the outset, reflected upon the delicacy of the new relation, and the proverbial acidity and sternness of it, and so preferred not to 'magnify' your 'office' in the way in which you may have supposed it sometimes is magnified.

"With psalm-tunes and reading the Old Testament Sunday evening, and with sundry of the garden flowers, and with 'Orion' in the heavens, I associate you most pleasantly."

I have no record of my father's early childhood,

other than the anecdotes he used to tell. Slight as these are, they serve, when taken together, to make a picture of the child, who was so like the man of after life. Apparently he felt the call to the ministry at an early age, for when he was barely able to talk, his sister found him preaching to the pigeons.

The following story shows his sensitiveness. When he was a small boy a distinguished man dined at his father's house. The little William, full of admiration and friendliness, followed him down the path and shyly gave him a wild flower. He watched the great man pass through the gate and saw him carelessly drop the flower, and the little boy felt such pain at having his gift despised, that it made him careful all his life of the feelings of children.

Another more cheerful tale illustrates his general benevolence and wish to help, so characteristic of him, although in later life this impulse fortunately was not attended with such comically disastrous consequences. One morning he heard his father and mother say at breakfast that they were going to ask the venerable Colonel Timothy Pickering to dinner. On the way to school he chanced to meet the stately old man, and then and there he

gave the invitation, which was promptly accepted. He thought no more about the matter, until, after his return from school, he saw the colonel coming down the street.

"Why, there comes Colonel Pickering!" Judge White exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes," said William, "I met him and asked him to come to dinner."

The consternation of the household at this revelation was extreme, for it appeared that Judge White had not been able to find what he wanted at the market, and the colonel was not one to be treated with informality. And here he was, coming in at the gate.

My father used to tell with inimitable humor of the dull and lifeless meal which followed, for apparently the social gifts of his beautiful stepmother were insufficient to meet the domestic crisis, as Judge White asked the colonel, in a subdued voice, if he would take a little salt fish.

The boy's life was diversified by many a trip with his father in the old-fashioned chaise, as he drove about the country attending the Probate Court. Sometimes they went as far as Exeter, where the relatives of his own mother lived, as well as those of his stepmother. Occasionally they

went to the farm at Methuen, to see Judge White's mother, a farm which is now in the heart of the city of Lawrence.

William's grandmother was a woman of strong personality, who had brought up a large family of children, and had had to turn her hand to everything. My father described her as she used to sit at the window, in her neat white cap, reading the Bible. On one occasion she passed the book to him.

"Where shall I read, grandmother?" he asked.

"Anywhere you like, child. It is all good."

Whereupon he mischievously turned to the Old Testament and read one of the lists of jaw-breaking names.

Once, when he was playing by himself at the farm, a neighbor's goose strayed from the flock and wandered over on his grandmother's land. The little boy impulsively took up a stone and threw it at the intruder. He had not the smallest expectation of hitting it, and when he saw the bird topple over and found that he had killed it, his surprise and consternation were great. When he confessed the deed to his grandmother, his punishment was swift. He was made to go over to the neighbor with his confession and to pay for the

goose. My father used to finish with a reminiscent gleam in his eye, "And we had roast goose for dinner."

Pumpkin pie was another dish which he associated with those early days. He remembered how his grandmother urged his father to let him "eat his fill of pumpkin pie," and years after the taste of this favorite dish made him "see his grandmother, as the taste of scarce any article had done for many a year." He writes: "I was straightway in grandmother's west room, before the open fire, with candles on the table, Aunt Charlotte bringing in the pie, and as father and I sat down to table, I could again hear grandmother's voice, 'Now, Daniel, do let the boy eat all he wants, for once,' as father remonstrated about a second piece of pie."

He also recalled the drives that he took with his grandmother through Pelham and Methuen and the pride with which she introduced him to her friends as "My son Daniel's son."

When he was a very little child, William went to Miss Hetty Higginson's Dame School for boys and girls. She was an excellent teacher and evidently had a great influence over her scholars, for he counted her among his best friends. Judging by

the beautiful old chairs and table that she left him, her house must have been most attractively furnished. The table, or, more properly, the low-boy, is of an ancient and unusually beautiful style, and always held a position of great dignity in its owner's house, being familiarly known to the family as "Miss Higginson."

It used to seem to us who listened to the tales of his childhood as if my father never forgot any thing or any person he had ever known, and when in later life one of his fellow pupils at Miss Higginson's school became a near neighbor, it was a great pleasure to him to go to see her and recall those old days which terminated before he was seven years old.

When his education at the Dame School was finished, he went to Mr. Nichols's school for boys. (December 3, 1827.) Here at the age of seven he began to study Latin grammar. The foundation laid thus early in the language stood him in good stead throughout his life.

When William was ten years old he was sent away to a boarding-school in Cambridge. It is interesting to compare the prices of the present day with those of more than eighty years ago, for we read that the total expense for tuition, with

board and lodging, was three hundred dollars a year.

Mr. Wells's school was a famous one in its day and was delightfully situated on Brattle Street. One can only hope the other small boys who shared its privileges were not so miserable as William was, for to him those few months were an unmitigated tragedy. He said that his acute homesickness, which lasted as long as he stayed there, was so severe that it cured him of the malady for life, and that never, even when he was ill and friendless in a foreign land, did he have anything approaching to it.

The earliest of his letters in my possession dates from this period, and after reading it we cannot wonder that his father decided to take him away from the school at the end of the first term. It runs as follows:—

CAMBRIDGE, *Monday noon,*
June 20, 1831.

MY DEAR FATHER,—

I think that I will write a few lines to you as I enclose this letter from Springfield. If you or Mary or Mother have not written to me when this reaches you, I hope you will, for as the boys

still plague me and I do not feel very happy, it always gives me great pleasure to hear from you or others. If Mrs. Holmes takes this I hope you will all write me by her, if convenient, as it will make me feel very happy to hear from you, but if it is inconvenient you need not or at least I shall expect something from home. I look forward with eagerness to the short span of two weeks when I hope to see Salem. Give my love to Mother, Henry and Mary and Cousin Nancy if you see her.

And believe me your affectionate son,

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE.

Eliza if you write to her tell her I send great love.

CHAPTER II

EXETER ACADEMY

1835–1836

In 1835, when William was fourteen years old, he went to Exeter Academy. He had the advantage of living with the Reverend Isaac Hurd, who was the brother of his stepmother, and he greatly enjoyed the companionship of a step-cousin, Frank Hurd, with whom he shared a room. He often referred to this year as one of the happiest of his boyhood.

From a packet of old letters filed away with great care by his parents, I have been able to piece together an account of his life in Exeter, and to get some idea of the Academy as it was more than three quarters of a century ago. In reading over these old letters one is forcibly struck by the confidence that existed between father and son, an intimate comradeship, which differs greatly from one's preconceived idea of the formal relations of the older and younger generation in those early years of the nineteenth century.

It is hard to picture a life so different from ours.

The long, slow journey by stage-coach was an event in itself. On one occasion he speaks of having a hasty dinner at Newburyport, at the house of his Aunt Marston.

"There was but one man inside the coach," he writes, "and he only went as far as Amesbury, and as there was little baggage on, and only one person outside with the driver, I experienced the severest shaking I had had this many a day."

Once having arrived at his journey's end, the provisions for comfort were not equal to those he was accustomed to in Salem.

He says, in writing on December 16, "I think you must be very comfortable at home with grates and stove, both of which are a luxury which have not been introduced into this bleak New Hampshire village."

Some sort of a stove there must have been downstairs, for a little later he writes, "I am now sitting down by the stove in the eating room, dearest father (for the wind has prevented the making of a fire in the chamber more than once since I returned.)"

The fires in their open fireplace could not have greatly raised the temperature of their bedroom, for we learn that he and his cousin Frank had to

break the ice in their water pitcher every morning throughout the winter.

He took pictures and a writing-desk with him from home, one of the old-fashioned desks small enough to be "conveniently carried about."

Good resolutions for the coming year, and a keen appreciation of the nuts, pears, and apples that were sent him from home, mingle in his letters with that delightful disregard for the conventional, which made him such a refreshing correspondent throughout his life, and gave to his personality a flavor and piquancy that were all its own.

If at times we feel from the letters that the youthful writer is so devoted to religion and to his studies, as to be one of those saints destined by the gods who love them to "die young," the next sentence relieves our minds.

Soon after reaching Exeter he writes as follows to his father: "I think as you do about the manner of passing the Sabbath, and shall make it a point to observe it in the manner you propose. I have joined a Bible class who study the second part of Allen's questions."

He goes on in the same letter: "You ask me about my studies, what lessons I have studied in Horace, etc. I have finished the first book since

you have returned, and am now beginning to review, getting five or six odes at a lesson. The pears have ripened beautifully. I have given a dishful to Aunt Hurd every day, and mean to carry some to Aunt Orne to-day. I ought not to have omitted that I get a lesson in Greek Grammar at present in the afternoon."

The classics took a prominent part in the curriculum of the Exeter Academy of those days. Again he says: "I recited the last lesson in Grammar this morning, and we translate an ode in Horace for to-night's lesson; i.e., we translate an ode into English and write it off on paper, which we hand up to Dr. Abbot in the morning. My Greek goes on very well. We have just finished Lucian's 'Dialogues of the Dead.' Every Tuesday morning we translate an ode, and every Friday we write from Latin Tutor. The other mornings we recite Horace, until we have finished the third book, when, I suppose, we shall begin to review our other studies. I shall want a 'Colburn's Algebra' soon. I am reading Irving's 'Life of Columbus' at present, which I am much interested in. When you next send I should like to have you put in a paper-knife and a pocketbook, both of which articles I have occasion for. As I shall want some

money to pay my fare to Portsmouth, and as we have got to buy an axe between us, I shall need some money."

This axe was a necessary part of their outfit, for one of the duties which devolved on the boys was chopping the wood for their open fire.

The home letters were always a great excitement to William. They were often enclosed in "the packet" which seems to have been sent frequently from home, sometimes containing articles of clothing and the ever-welcome gingerbread, nuts, or pears. On one occasion he writes, "Aunt Hurd was strongly minded to tie my letter to a pillow-case, which she wished to send on, to get some crackers in, but will wait till mother comes, or some other opportunity." And another time he says, "Aunt Orne was much pleased with the contents of her jars. The rose water, she wished me to say to mother, was prime. The nuts, tender, I know not, but delicious."

He had already acquired a passion for reading the newspapers and a vivid interest in the thermometer. During an Exeter winter he had abundant chances to gratify both tastes. Many a walk was taken to the house of his mother's relative by marriage, "Aunt Orne," ostensibly for the purpose

of making a friendly call, but I fear quite as much for the sake of reading the "Salem Gazette," for afterwards when in college, he begs his father to send it to him, "as I can now no longer go over to Aunt Orne's to tea and 'bring the paper.'"

The winter of 1835–36 was unusually severe. On December 16, 1835, he writes: "This morning I took my walk as usual, of more than a mile out. The wind was very high indeed, the thermometer 4° below zero. On my return I looked again and found it 6° below, just after dinner 12° below, and just before supper 14° below zero. It would not be so remarkable, were it not for the very high wind which has been blowing the whole time and still continues to. Two of the boys had their ears frozen, another his fingers, who came from a distance to the Academy."

On March 15, 1836, he writes: "I have enjoyed my walks more than ever. Almost every day last week, and this week too, the crust has been excellent, and I have taken almost all my walks in the fields and woods, and principally up and down the river. The river last week afforded excellent exercise, as we could walk, slide, etc., just as we pleased. To-night, before tea, I walked on the New-Market road almost a mile till I got opposite

Pine Hill, when I crossed the large river and walked home through the fields. Several teams had passed across within a day or two, so there was a good track across."

EXETER, *February* 14, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER, —

I was very much pleased to hear from home again, and to have such good accounts of all at home. The packet arrived just as I had returned from Aunt Orne's where I took tea. I thank you very much for your delightful letter, which it afforded me real pleasure to read. Your present was just such an one as I should have wished, and corresponds very well with my other poets of the same form. I was very much pleased at being so kindly remembered while away by all my friends at home, and I value my presents, not only on account of their intrinsic worth, but proving, as they do, that though absent, I still am with you. What you say about application and perseverance is, I think, very just, and I hope that I may be enabled to carry into effect all my good resolutions. Upon reviewing the past year, I think I have an hundred causes to be grateful for all the mercies that I have enjoyed, and I hope that I am not

insensible to all the advantages with which I am surrounded. I finished Sir Henry Vane last week, and have been much pleased with the perusal of it. I liked all of Dr. Channing's "Slavery," though, with some others, think the present hardly a fit time for the debating the question. He seems to have been handled rather roughly by some of the Southern members, in Congress."

The letters from Exeter go on pleasantly with their daily chronicle of studies, walks to Aunt Orne's, and more stimulating expeditions with young companions.

"Thank you for what you said about study and exercise. Though I shall have to study pretty hard, I shall not give up my walks. I stopped a minute at Miss Emery's last evening, to see if she had nothing to send, and as she had no more than her love, I thought it would be hardly worth while to fit out a bundle to send it, so as I have nothing to send home at present, you will find this letter in the Post-Office."

His Sundays seem to have been strenuous days, for occasionally there were three services. Once he writes: "Mr. Clement of Chester preached all day on Sunday, and there was a third service at

half past five, when I went again, and he preached a sermon of fifty-seven minutes. He seems to be much the smartest of the pack about here. . . .

"The highest and lowest, richest and poorest, have never yet got along entirely without money, and I confess myself to be in want of that article at present, and will thank you to send some in the next bundle."

He writes in August of that same year: "I know of no summer that I have passed in such good health as the present. I have had less of the headache than usual, and am, I think, stronger and better than in last winter. The exercise, of course, goes on the same, morning and evening, and I find my walks very pleasant, especially the latter, evening, when I am generally accompanied by a pleasant companion."

This was a great contrast to the summer before when he was so pale and thin that he was greeted by a frank relative with, "William, you look as if you were in the last stages of consumption." These words were peculiarly sinister because more than one of his young uncles on his mother's side of the house had died at an early age of this dreaded disease. This cutting remark, which might have had a serious effect on him, proved to be most for-

tunate, for it goaded him into prompt action and this boy of fourteen intuitively discovered the value of open-air treatment for threatened lung trouble. He immediately went down to the wharves in Salem and engaged to go for a ten days' fishing cruise with a redoubtable "Captain Small." At the end of the time he came home sunburned and vigorous, having gained as many pounds as the number of days he had been away.

Toward the end of his year in Exeter there was an "exhibition" in which he took part, his task being to compare Homer and Virgil. When one hears of the higher standard of education now, it is interesting to look back at the tasks these boys had to undertake eighty years ago. He writes on August 1, 1836: "Dr. Abbot has given two characters to two of the boys to write upon, each one taking his own man, and after they had done he wished me to draw a sort of parallel or comparison between the two men. We have decided to take Homer and Virgil, which he seemed to prefer we should write upon. The Exhibition takes place now in about three weeks, and we shall have to be ready within a fortnight, I suppose, in order to rehearse before the day comes."

EXETER ACADEMY

EXETER, *August* 10, 1836.
Wednesday afternoon.

Many thanks, dearest father, for your long and beautiful letter. I am very much indebted to you for the pains you were at in hunting up those musty volumes, and sending them so promptly. Saturday afternoon and most of Sunday I passed in reading about the Iliad and Odyssey from the books that you sent, and Monday had permission to stay out to write. By the way, all the boys who have parts, are allowed a day (many of them have taken two) to write in. This morning was rather auspicious, but the afternoon so hot, that I found myself nodding over my paper! However, I did as much as I could, and the rest I finished at my odd times yesterday, and this morning. I have not spent so much time upon it as most of the others, because I have no time to spare. As it is, you must expect to see what a boy of fifteen, who has never been in the regular habit of writing but for a short time, would be apt to stumble upon. . . . You see, by what I have said above, how I pass my Sundays, and I am inclined to think the two next will hardly be more hallowed by me. However, the way that I have kept my Sundays for the last eleven months

will excuse, as I think, a little dereliction at the end of the year. . . .

I am now anticipating the time when I shall have the pleasure of rejoicing in the light of your countenance. Come, and stay a good while. It will do you good, and I think you would enjoy yourself. You know it is probably the last time that you will have a peculiar interest in the town.

The essay is preserved with the letters, and the following extracts show his vivid interest in the characters described by the two poets:—

"In the Iliad we have Achilles, Agamemnon, Diomed, Menelaus, and a host of others, all warriors, yet all marked by a variety of feature and disposition, and each seeming to perform his part in the great design, with perfect order and harmony. The sage Nestor, retaining in his age the vigor and animation of youth, appears in beautiful contrast with Priam, enfeebled by years, yet affecting; delighting us with the strength of his paternal attachment. If Virgil is wanting in the energy and heat of Homer, he seems to surpass him in the pathos and tenderness of his scenes. Pallas and Evander, Nisus and Euryalus, Æneas and Andromache, seem to appear before us as we read. The

whole of the second book of the Æneid abounds in exciting images of fear and sorrow. . . .

"When we review the pages of these two noble poets, and contemplate the beauty and elegance of both, we feel hardly able to give the preference to either, and are ready to say with Quintilian, —

"'*Fortasse equalitate pensamus.*'"

CHAPTER III

HARVARD COLLEGE

1836–1840

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE entered Harvard College in 1836, in time to be present at its two hundredth anniversary. He shared his college quarters with Edward B. Peirson, of Salem, who was most congenial and who was his warm friend to the end of Dr. Peirson's life. That first year they roomed at 1 Holworthy, and the young Freshman says, in writing to his father, "Things look quite comfortable now in Number One; that is the number you know we are told we must all look out for"; and he adds, "The Sophomores have been about for two or three evenings, and they took care of Number One."

Cambridge was so much nearer home than Exeter that there were many chances for seeing his family, and his letters therefore were less frequent. They give, however, a vivid picture of the Harvard of those days. There is a delightful flavor of restfulness about these early letters. The very

methods of travel carry us back into another world; for in comparison with the mad rush of the subway was the omnibus that went so seldom, and the toll at the bridge.

After returning by stage from Salem, he writes: "I had just time to run to Mr. Sargent's office, and leave your letter at his door, as the office was shut. I caught up with the omnibus just as it was making round the corner, and secured a ride out, not without having rolled myself and bundle at full length in Brattle Street, to the admiration of many pygmy urchins."

But if the modes of travel seem antiquated to us, there are passages in the letters that show that human nature has not changed. He writes on May 19, 1837: "Dr. Palfrey preached an uncommonly good sermon on 'the times' on Sunday, from Haggai 1st, 5, 'Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your ways.' He traced the present misfortunes as principally caused by a 'gambling spirit in trade,' and the 'too profuse style of living for the last years.'" The letter continues: "There is a great deal of inconvenience suffered by every one more or less for the want of 'specie.' I luckily have a few coppers to pay my toll, in case I go into town. I was amused to hear a person say, who

'had been to have his hair cut,' that the man would not take a bank bill or trust him; he went about to all the stores to no purpose to have it changed and was obliged to borrow the twelve and a half cents."

The young student warns his father not to take the stories that he hears too seriously; for there was the same exaggeration in spreading reports by those who love to make a sensation as there is now. He says: "One of the Juniors sent off was proved to have been unjustly dismissed and this it is probable excited somewhat the ire of his classmates and led to the blowing up of sundry windows in University Hall and the lower floor of Hollis. One Junior has been since sent away, whether for suspicion of that I am uncertain, or for scraping at prayers, — the latter I think. The President gave notice at prayers that the faculty had determined to present to the grand jury at Concord in December the names of such as they had reason to think connected with the explosions, unless a full confession should be made before that time. The evening after this there was an explosion louder than before. This is all (except one evening some noise at prayers) that has taken place and probably little more will come of it. The blowing up

many think very foolish, as it will only increase the term bills of each student, the expense being divided among the whole."

There were similar disturbances some years later; as in 1846 he writes: "Sanger says the Cambridge 'city watch' has been of great service in keeping good order in the place. The watch do not scruple to break into a room of carousing law students at night if they are disturbing the neighborhood."

There is certainly more than one kind of pleasure to be found in reflecting on "the good old times."

In that period before the days of the elective system, the Freshmen had stiff courses; William writes on September 13, 1836: "Yesterday we recited our lessons as usual. In Herodotus at ten, in Livy at eleven, in geometry at two P.M. To-day, instead of Herodotus, we recited in Buttman's Greek Grammar, which I have bought. We get a lesson I believe every Tuesday in it. On Thursday we recite in Grecian Antiquities, which I have also got. To-morrow (*in locum Livii*) we recite in Zumpt's Latin Grammar."

But as usual his letters are interspersed by lighter touches. He says in the same letter: "If

you have time, and think it worth while, you may get two mats to send by the baggage wagon, one to put in the entry, and another by my room. I find the absence of them a more serious inconvenience than mother will believe when she reflects upon the mud, that sometimes crept onto the Brussels carpet, suspected of having found its way in, under the passport of my boots."

A few days later he writes: "I should like some more money, in case I get shovel, poker, broom, etc. I got rid of one dollar with great ease, by just stopping at the dentist's a few minutes. If every tooth in my head will sell for a dollar, I am worth more, after all, than I ever imagined."

A little later in the same year, October 5, 1836, it is interesting to note that he says in writing to his father: "I hope you will be able to make good your stand against the [Salem] tunnel, and that the 'experiment' may not begin with us."

He goes on to say: "A week ago on Tuesday, I heard Mr. Adams's eulogy on Madison, or parts of it, for there was such a crowd at the Odeon, that I could hardly get in. The procession looked very well, with two bands of music, behind and before. I liked Mr. Adams's closing words very much where he drew a comparison between the

present and former times, and the different duties incumbent on men of the present day."

The next week he writes: "I should like to have you send a copious set of ancient maps. I find such a thing a great 'desideratum' in my Latin and Greek lessons. If mother is about 'commencing operations' in regard to my winter coat, let it be a frock, as I think it much warmer and more comfortable for cold weather. I am in want again of a good umbrella; you recollect the last one you gave me as a New Year's present, was made way with, while I was absent at Methuen, the loss of which was my misfortune rather than my fault. The ancient green one of Emily's is here. I meant to have told you, when you were here, that Donnegan's lexicon that you got in Boston has several pages left out in the body of the work, among the deltas. It is not much inconvenience, but I thought I would tell you, that it might lessen some of your pride at having made a good bargain."

CAMBRIDGE, *October* 13, 1836.

There has been but little variety in the week, excepting the conflict of the elements on yesterday, which in their capers shook our windows most lus-

tily, and drew forth from one of our blinds the most piteous sighs and wailings, that I ever remember to have heard a blind utter. I am much indebted to the author of the cake and gingerbread that came last week, as also to the gatherer of the pears. The former, I reflect upon with pleasure, the latter I continue to "anticipate much pleasure" in discussing.

CAMBRIDGE, *November* 13, 1836.

MY DEAR MOTHER, —

Frank heard from his "folks" who were all well, except Miss Mary Emery who had come near burning up. His mother said that she was taking something out of the stove, when her dress caught fire, and she screamed for water, but the black woman who was washing, losing the small quantum of sense that she was at other times blessed with, went out after clean water (the woman was generally a great slut); the girl in the other room made a cry which brought down Mr. Soule and his wife, when the fire was put out by a pail thrown by Mr. Soule. They thought it quite wonderful that she escaped as she did, for her clothes were almost all burned. I would not have detailed this at such length, but that it illustrates the advantage of

always going after clean water, for who would think of throwing water from a washtub upon a lady!

To D. A. W.

CAMBRIDGE, *February* 24, 1837.

We were examined on Monday in Herodotus (fifth and sixth books). You said you should like to hear how the examinations were conducted. The second and third divisions (which only were examined), were divided alphabetically into four sections, making six or seven in each. These came in, the first at nine, next at ten, eleven, and twelve, etc. G. S. Hillard and Mr. Cunningham were among the examiners. There were six of these, I believe. The examination, Very told us, was spoken very well of by the committee.

CAMBRIDGE, *March* 24, 1837.
Friday morning.

Wednesday afternoon we were examined in Algebra, by the same committee that examined us in Geometry. Each one was called upon to do one sum at the blackboard.

CAMBRIDGE, *April* 28, 1837.
Friday morning.

Our table consists of twelve — eight were the usual number at one table in commons. Names: Bond, Capen, Crafts, Davis (Ch. G.), Henk, Kimball, Peirson, Russell, Sanger, Smith, Southworth, White.

Wednesday, July 12, 1837.

On Monday we were examined in Thucydides, and shall have another examination on Friday in Brutus, and no recitations after Saturday morning, Monday being Exhibition, and Tuesday Class Day.[1]

William continues: "Yesterday afternoon our class were examined in Analytic Geometry by the same committee as before. I do not hear how the examination was liked by the committee yesterday, but Mr. Pierce has more than once said to different persons that it was the best class in Mathematics that he ever had, decidedly. Professor Channing, to whom we have begun to recite this year, says very much the same in regard to his department — that the average mark for our reci-

[1] It is interesting to note that Class Day came on Tuesday in 1837, just as it did again in 1912, when it was considered such a departure from an old custom.

tations in Rhetoric is higher than with any former class he recollects."

Notwithstanding the young student's interest in his studies, he was keenly alive to the spirit of the times, and his many-sided nature was open to widely different impressions. After hearing a famous preacher of the time he writes: "Sunday Mr. Ware preached all day, and yesterday [Fast Day] we had but one service, and to be sure and split the day, and not slight either forenoon or afternoon, that began at twelve o'clock."

He went, besides, to a course of Ralph Waldo Emerson's lectures in which he was greatly interested. He also writes enthusiastically of going to hear Edwin Forrest: "Wednesday evening I heard Forrest in 'Macbeth' and was much gratified by what I saw of him. I read the play before hearing it, but I do not think it lost much interest on that account. When he saw Banquo's ghost, and when he heard that 'Birnam woods were coming,' he showed more feeling and raved more than I could have thought possible. However, the principal interest was owing to him, and I do not feel as though I should care about going in, unless when such an uncommon actor is there, and then I see not why it may not be of benefit to any one."

In the summer vacation of 1837 William took a trip to Quebec and Montreal with his father. He thus describes it: —

To R. H. W.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN, *Monday afternoon, August* 21, 1837.

Our first afternoon and evening [at Quebec] were chilly and stormy, and the letter we wrote to you did much toward enlivening us. We were quite sorry that we missed the mail of that day in sending the letter, when we found it must be five days or more before it reached you. We had intended to leave Quebec that evening, but not knowing that any boat would go we were contented to wait another day, and hear the Governor's speech at the opening of the Legislature. The next morning about nine we called for Mr. DeBleury, who took us over the new Parliament House which we were much pleased with, as being both handsome and convenient. From its top we had a very good view of the city. We then again attended the parade and music, fell in with Colonel Beard to whom father was introduced by Mr. Freer, and found him a kind and polite old gentleman. He took us into the citadel, from the highest point of which

we had a most grand and commanding view of the city and whole adjacent country with the St. Lawrence winding up and down, and sparkling in the sun. . . . The [Council] room was quite a small one, and it was with difficulty people were accommodated, but as soon as they complete the Parliament House, it will be otherwise. After waiting a short time the Governor rode up in a splendid barouche with four white, prancing horses; a driver in white, trimmed with red, and two finely attired footmen. He was escorted by a band and the military. He came into the room in his feathered hat and military dress, and then, after the Chief Justice had formally given the Governor's orders that the other branch (the Assembly) should come in, and they were present, he read off his speech (a short one too) and then the Chief Justice read the same in French. The speech was thought a mild and conciliatory one — but the Assembly are at present bent on having their way, and it is not thought they will at all harmonize with the Council, and therefore there will be no session, of any consequence. The Assembly is elective, of which Papineau is Speaker; the Council appointed for life by the Governor.

The John Bull left Quebec at six P.M. and we

had quite a pleasant sail in the moonlight and sunset. We saw much to excite our admiration and astonishment at Quebec. The houses and streets are different from anything we had before seen, the dogs harnessed in little carts, sometimes filled with milk, or with little fellows whipping them onward. The houses of both Montreal and Quebec being roofed with tin, present a very striking appearance to one who sees these cities for the first time.

On September 15, 1837, my father gives an account of his studies for the Sophomore year: "Since I returned, my time has passed with great sameness, though my studies and hours of recitation have been in a measure changed. Of these perhaps you may like to hear a few words. We continue one more year with Mr. Pierce and recite to him immediately after prayers on Saturday and Monday mornings, and two hours before evening prayers on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, at present at four P.M. The book we are now upon is Analytic Geometry, and we are just in 'Conic Sections.' To Professor Channing we recite at present in Campbell's 'Philosophy of Rhetoric' at eleven o'clock Monday and Wednesday mornings, half the class reciting at ten, the other half at eleven,

being divided alphabetically. We have not yet begun to write translations or themes, but shall begin in the course of a week or so, handing one in to Professor Channing every other Saturday. To Dr. Beck we recite (third division) at eleven o'clock on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and to Professor Felton on the same days at nine o'clock. Besides this we have a recitation every Wednesday at eight o'clock, in Greek or Latin, alternately. We recite in Horace to Dr. B. and in the Odyssey to Professor F. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the section that I am in (composed of some of the class who have studied French elsewhere), recite to Mr. Sales at five P.M. At present we are studying *Proverbes Grammatiques*, and the Grammar, and writing a short exercise for each recitation."

On March 21, 1839, he writes from Cambridge:

"I think the tenour of my letters is too egotistical, but how can I help it? Though there are a thousand things that would interest you as much, there are few matters that fall under my observation, except those in which I figure myself, and your asking me to tell you what I have been doing or planning must be my apology for going into such details.

But this letter must vary its tone a little. So let me send you into the old Watertown burying ground (just beyond Mount Auburn), where you might have seen me, on the last beautiful Sunday morning, engaged in copying the following inscription which I there came across.

"'Pious Lydia, made and given,
By God, as a most meet
Help to John Bailey
Minister of ye Gospel.
Good betimes, Best at last.
Lived by Faith. Died in peace.
Went off singing. Left us weeping.
Walk't with God till translated,
In ye 39 yeare of her age
April ye 16. 1691 ;
Read her epitaph.
In Proverbs 31. 10. 11. 12. 28. 29. 30. & 31.'

"The inscription was recut in 1821, so that it was quite distinct. By her side (Pious Lydia's) lies the veritable John Bailey himself, whose chief characteristic (among many others) is that of

'A painful preacher,'

whence I apprehend his favorite topic must have been (as was said of another) the 'eternity of hell torments.' I took the walk, before alluded to, with Stephen Phillips."

HARVARD COLLEGE

Saturday, May 18, 1839.

MY DEAR FATHER, —

I write, in a great hurry, to tell you about next exhibition in July, the last Wednesday in the term, you being more nearly interested in my success than anybody here, or elsewhere. I have a Latin oration, the first part in order in the exhibition, not what I should like, but yet I must perform it. Please suggest any subject you may think of, and send it next week. I don't promise to take it, but I should like your opinion on the subject. Henk has the English oration, of course, Peirson an essay. Clarke has an English version, and speaks immediately after me, second in order. Frank Parker also has a Greek Dialogue with Hoffman, so you see there are several people whom you know that have parts. The pleasantest thing connected with the whole is, that it does not occur on your Probate Day.

In haste your
deadlanguage son
WM: O. WHITE.

Twelve minutes are allowed me.

He spent a part of his winter vacation in the year 1840 in Springfield, and writes: —

SPRINGFIELD, *January* 20, 1840.

Soon after dinner, J. E. called in an open sleigh, and asked me to join him in a ride to Chicopee, where he had business. I knew it was cold, but thought I would like the variety of a ride, and assented. But the mercury must be thousands of degrees higher, and the Captain's old donkey twenty times fleeter, before I get caught in such a scrape again. I should have believed I was on the Lapland snows, but oh! the Laplanders have the nimble reindeer to hurry them across the snow, and are not borne by dotard donkeys, at a funeral pace across the wilderness.

To D. A. W.

CAMBRIDGE, *April* 24, 1840.

This fine weather will tempt you to take some of the family on a visit to Cambridge, ere long, I dare say, and every day (Thursdays excepted) I shall be happy to wait upon you. You can stroll about the College grounds, and see where trees have been decapitated, and annihilated, and transmigrated; you can look into the new library, and

see how neat and handsome the interior promises to be, and the progress it makes pretty rapidly towards completion; and exhausted by your walk, expend your remaining strength in ascending to my castle in the air, where from the window of my bedroom, into which I have now moved for the season (and whose appearance is so changed by an improved adjustment of the furniture, that you would not recognize it), you shall gaze out upon the green beauties of Prospect Hill, and the busy, fluttering windmill on its summit, together with the bright fields and trees intervening, and then wheel yourself around, and see the hills and trees of Watertown, and then exclaim, "My son, you are elevated into a most etherial sitivation!"

People in this goodly place have been somewhat terrified by repeated attempts at incendiarizing, during the last week or two, and there is now a patrol established through the night. Mrs. Craigie's barn, and the cottage on her premises, at a considerable distance from each other, were both one calm night discovered to be on fire, at the same time. The obvious inference was that the fire was not spontaneous or accidental. As a few weeks ago plate had been stolen from Mr. Lowell's house, another inference was that the design was

that Mrs. Craigie's house should burn, and people be diverted by the fire at the cottage from guarding properly the house, — when that should be plundered. The Universalist meeting-house at the Port came near burning down the other night. Shavings were kindled on the floor of the house, and the carpet wrapped around them, in order that the fire might not burst out till pretty late, but people coming out from a vestry meeting, smelt the carpet, and of course soaked it.

Again William gives an account of his studies, which continued to be of engrossing interest. He was so fortunate as to study Spanish literature three times a week with Professor Henry W. Longfellow.

Friday, May 15, 1840.

Last evening Clarke and I went in to join the great gathering at Faneuil Hall. We were early enough to secure a snug corner, in which we could sit as well as stand, and where there was a cool breeze playing, so that our enjoyment was greater than it would have been if jammed up, as almost everybody was, for the house was crammed to overflowing. Mr. Everett began by saying that

he was glad to see that "old Faneuil had not pulled the string in, on this occasion." He had been requested to explain the object of this meeting. "Explain the object, why, my friends," said he, "I think we've got beyond that. I should as soon think of attempting to explain to you the original of that picture which now looks down upon you." He spoke of the fathers, who had formerly assembled in that hall, and who though we might not see them "with the eye of sense," were present to assist and inspire us. After alluding to the great feeling which animates the Whigs throughout the country, and the encouragement for them to march onward to battle, he said it was not too much to say that "the sods would heave, the graves of our fathers open," and (turning to the Washington on horseback) "horseman and horse leap from the pictured canvas, and go before you." He spoke very finely for as much as twenty or twenty-five minutes.

Mr. E. said afterwards, "the old coach of state would roll on at the next election, driver, or no driver." The most enthusiastic exhibition of feeling during the evening was when Mr. Everett rose again after Wickliffe, to introduce some one else. W. had not mentioned E. particularly, he had been

condemning the state generally, but when Mr. Everett[1] rose they all seemed to feel what they had lost in him, and hats, handkerchiefs, and all went up, and everybody hurrahed at the top of their lungs, and clapped till they were tired.

When he graduated in 1840, William Orne White was the orator of his class, and his family came from Salem to be present on the great occasion. His friend, Margaret Eliot Harding, was also of the company, she who was afterwards to share his life for more than fifty years. A paper, preserved through all these years in his stepmother's handwriting, shows with what care she arranged his spread, and the list of the good things to eat brings the scene vividly before one's mind.[2]

It must have been with real regret that William closed this chapter of his life, for it was a period

[1] In 1835, Edward Everett was chosen Governor of Massachusetts, and again in 1836 and 1837, failing of election for the fourth year by the loss of one vote in over one hundred thousand.

[2] Refreshments at William's room, Class Day, July 16, 1840.

1 ham, a small-sized piece of boiled beef, currant jelly, 2 doz. lemons, 2 doz. oranges, boxes of strawberries, 2 do. raspberries, 2 boxes of gooseberries, sugar, and cream, 5 quarts of ice cream, 4 doz. of currant pound cake, 4 doz. of gingerbread, 4 pans of sponge cake, 4 doz. of bread rolls.

Flowers from the Botanic garden $1.00.

Thomas's services very useful. Half the quantity of cake would have been sufficient.

that he dwelt on most tenderly in after years. How little he could have imagined then that he was to live to be the last survivor of that class! How little, too, in those early days he would have desired it. At one of his class reunions he said how sad would be the lot of the last survivor of the class and how little one would desire to have that fate. Whereupon some of his companions said, "I don't know about that."

A fragment was found among his papers containing a part of the notes for a speech that he evidently made at one of his class dinners, in which he gives a vivid description of the teachers of those days: —

"If the name of Harvard still stands out bright; if we can spell out the names in some old Latin Quinquennial; if these groves and halls, and the dear friends and teachers associated with them still linger in our minds, surely we might dream our lives away under far less happy auspices.

"If, among the thickening shadows, forms like these flit across our vision, — Quincy, the magnificent; Felton, ever genial and loving; Channing, guarding the well of English undefiled; Longfellow, the young Apollo that he was; Very, his "rapt soul sitting in his eyes"; Sparks, of Websterian mien;

Walker, in all his pulpit majesty; together with hosts of dear companions inseparably associated with these haunts, — while among them Alma Mater herself should seem to be personified, we need not fear to follow, as we see her pointing out the distant goal toward which these pilgrims are still pressing, and seeming to say, '*Sic itur ad astra!*'"

CHAPTER IV

EUROPE AND THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

1840–1845

My father's health had been somewhat enfeebled by his five continuous years of hard study, and he had always shown such good judgment in his plans for himself that his father consented to an indefinite foreign trip, which lasted longer than either of them expected, for he was away from home two years.

This is the first letter that I find concerning his voyage to India with Mr. Henry F. Bond.

To D. A. W.

Springfield, *July* 24, 1840.

. . . I am very well satisfied with the result of your interview with Captain Perry. The more I thought of the plan, the less I thought I should like it, as long as there was a chance of going afterwards with Bond. As to the latter's being an invalid companion, I suppose he is just about as much of an invalid as I am, and very little more.[1]

[1] One of these two "invalids" lived to be eighty-eight and the other ninety years old.

Dr. Jackson thought a sea-voyage would be an excellent thing for him. Yet even if Bond were not at all in health, I should hardly think it a reason for taking a separate vessel. As it is, since he has failed once in trying to secure a vessel for him, and I also, once, in trying to secure one for me, I trust that it is fated that we shall be more successful, by and by, when we try together, and succeed in getting one that will take us both.

Mr. White and Mr. Bond took passage in the Damariscotta, where Mr. Bond was engaged as supercargo. It is interesting to note that the passage money for the long voyage to Calcutta was only two hundred and fifty dollars.

They sailed on September 7, 1840. The first chance to send a letter home occurred when they were nineteen days out, when they met the barque Olive and Eliza of Portsmouth. In after years my father wrote: "I well recall the thrill which our United States flag (flung out from our barque) gave me. We had a *country*, even out there on the ocean."

The long voyage of nearly five months was uneventful and monotonous, and their food was not all that could be desired; for their "American cap-

tain saved two of his four barrels of flour to sell in India, thus letting his passengers taste fresh bread but once a month for a day or two during the voyage." My father found much to enjoy, however, for he did not have a seasick moment, and he had always had an especial fondness for the sea in all its phases. He took a large chest of books with him, and spent much of his time in reading. Nevertheless, I think it must have been with some satisfaction that he saw the coast of India appearing in the distance. They reached Kedgeree, fifty miles from Calcutta, on January 21, 1841.

The two young men parted company at Calcutta, Mr. Bond making the return voyage with the Damariscotta, while my father took passage in the brig Télégraphe for France. The first point at which he touched was the Island of St. Helena.

One of the residents upon whom he called thus wrote of him: "There was a son of Judge White's here the day before yesterday, on his way to France from Calcutta. We were much pleased with him, and regretted his stay was so short; he remained here about six or seven hours."

My father writes: "Well do I recall that day in St. Helena: the languishing buildings at Longwood: the still open grave whence, some four months

previous, the remains of Napoleon had been taken to France: my horseback ride of a few hours, and the soughing of the pines, etc., reminding me of the sound of the waves; also my halting in my English at Consul Carroll's in my talk with a lady, so habituated had I become to talking in French on the French brig Télégraphe."

His French stood him in good stead, for on his arrival in France when he heard a cabman say, "He's a foreigner, we'll charge him double," he was able to reply, "I may be a foreigner, but I have not been on this boat all this time for nothing." Whereupon, the man shrugged his shoulders, laughed merrily, and came down to the normal charge.

In the summer of 1841 he took a trip through Switzerland where he greatly enjoyed mountain climbing. Years after he writes: "Perhaps the grandest instantaneous burst of scenery I ever witnessed was in August, 1841, when, like the throwing up of a curtain, at a sudden turn of the road from Dijon to Geneva, the blue lake and the whole extended Mont Blanc chain, glittering in the afternoon sunlight, was disclosed to us beclouded ones. My French companions smote the diligence and hands and voices were powerless

William Orne White at the age of nineteen

From a painting by Thomas Badger in 1840

From a painting by Thomas Badger in 1840

to express our pent-up feelings. That view I seem to see even now."

From Switzerland he went down the Rhine and in the autumn proceeded to Italy, which was a storehouse of all that he most longed to see. Venice, Florence, Rome, and Naples were all places of enchantment to him. His ascent of Vesuvius when he looked into the crater and his visit to Herculaneum and Pompeii made an especial impression upon him. He wrote to his father, "that would alone reward one for a passage across the ocean." And in another letter he says: "In May, 1842, Allan and I ascended Vesuvius, coming down at midnight, under a full moon."

From Naples he took a French government ship for Malta, Alexandria, etc., in company with Dr. Henry J. Bigelow. At Alexandria they were detained because my father was ill with fever. The second week of his illness he began to improve so rapidly that his companion felt easy in leaving him. He grew worse, however, instead of better. His illness proved to be a very serious one and he was detained from January 25 to March 5. It was fortunate that he had been cured once for all of homesickness when he was away at school at the age of ten, as otherwise the situation would

have seemed very desperate. To be alone in a foreign country with an indifferent doctor and an unsatisfactory nurse was enough to make any but the stoutest heart lose courage. But before leaving him Dr. Bigelow had called in Dr. Bell, of Edinburgh, "who was a charming man as well as an excellent physician," in consultation with the Alexandria doctor. My father writes, "He would take no pay, being in the British Service and waiting for transference to India."

As soon as he was able to travel, Mr. Perkins Shepherd, who was a friend of Dr. Bigelow, and Mr. Walker, of Cumberland County, England, invited him to go up the Nile to Cairo with them in the covered boat which they had engaged. My father calls them "as capital angels of mercy as ever lived."

He returned to Alexandria after an eleven days' trip, the ascent of the highest pyramid being one of its principal features. He was now so plump and well that his former companions hardly recognized him.

One can picture the anxiety with which his father at home waited for further news of his illness, but he was fortunately spared a knowledge of the full extent of it until his son was on the road

to recovery, for "a straggling, clumsy letter," written from his sick-bed, "happily did not arrive till twelve months later, when W. O. W. saw it opened in the Salem parlor."

From Alexandria he took the boat to Syra and thence proceeded to Greece, his study of the classics giving him the keenest appreciation of Athens and all the other historic places of which he had read with such interest.

Perhaps his most unusual experience was a trip taken with some chance companions through Sicily. One of these was Mr. Allan, who afterwards published an illustrated account of the journey, and the other was a young Scotchman, Mr. Drummond.

In writing to a relative many years later, he says: "Taormina, in 1842, I could only see from beneath. My foot was fiercely lame from an encounter with a stone in walking on Ithaca 'horrid with cliffs,' as Homer hath it. So I looked up, and had to be content with my fellow traveller Allan's account of the view. He and I were rowed up the Anapas near Syracuse, and touched the papyrus. We did not ascend Pellegrino, but we went out to Segesta where the temple, grandly placed, exceeds in vastness the Neptune temple

at Pæstum. Fifty-seven years have scarce dulled the mental photographs which Catania, Seliauntium, Girgenti, Segesta, and Palermo fixed; as in a steamer, chartered for the uncle of the Bismarck Emperor William, with his sons and a few others, we touched at Pæstum, from Naples, and skirted the island of Sicily."

My father used to relate how he and Mr. Allan arrived at a small hut late one night and begged for shelter. He described the alarming motions of one of the men, who in pantomime seemed to suggest to another the cutting the throats of these strangers and throwing them over the cliff. But it afterwards appeared that he was merely suggesting the manner of providing a substantial breakfast for them. At another hut the woman gathered her child to her to prevent the strangers from looking at the baby with the "evil eye," but a fuller acquaintance with them dispelled this fear.

The young man's most interesting experiences came in consequence of letters of introduction to distinguished persons, such as Miss Joanna Baillie whom he saw in Hampstead with her sisters, and through the friends that he made in traveling. His chance acquaintance, Mr. Drummond, gave him letters to his relatives in Scot-

land which led to his having a unique experience, for he stayed at a castle for a few days, and the life there, which included a day of hunting, was very picturesque. The pleasant acquaintance thus begun with the ladies of the castle led to a correspondence at infrequent intervals which lasted for many years.

He continued his habit of exercise which he formed in Exeter, for he writes of "walking eight miles before breakfast from Stratford to Warwick, and eight miles before breakfast, from Salisbury to Amesbury."

He also went to the English Lakes and on one of his walks there had the great pleasure of seeing the poet Wordsworth. Finding himself in the neighborhood of Wordsworth's house, he was seized with the desire to stop and thank him for the pleasure which his verses had given him. As he went up the walk to the front door, he saw the gray-haired poet sitting by the front window, and to his great surprise it was he who opened the door. In those days visitors from America were not so frequent as they were later and the young man was asked to stay to supper, a pleasant meal enlivened by the conversation of the younger people. It was there that he first saw the very large straw-

berries such as he had not seen in America. It would be interesting to have an account of all that was said, but I can only add that Wordsworth followed him to the gate and wished him a prosperous journey.

My father also greatly enjoyed his visit to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Many years after, he writes thus of his memories of Cambridge to a relative who sent him a gift from that historic place: "I shall once more seem to be seated in Old Trinity Hall, and to hear Professor Whewell and the Duke of Cambridge speak, and to *see* Mr. Everett, to whom the beasts would not give a chance to speak, at the annual collegiate dinner. Once more the Duke of Wellington, with scarlet gown 'all flying down behind,' will amble into town, the Chancellor elect, on his white pony. Once more the distant figures in St. John's grounds will flit to and fro in the lantern-lighted grove, as the dance proceeds, while I lean upon the Cam — his bridge, and see the picturesque spectacle."

He sailed from Southampton and reached Salem in the latter part of September, 1842. His homecoming was shadowed by the death of a little namesake, William Orne White, the child of his sister, Mrs. Caleb Foote. He got back just in time

for the funeral of this baby who had been born since he left home, and this must have been a deep sorrow to one who lived so much in his affections.

In the autumn of 1843 Mr. White entered the Harvard Divinity School. I have found no record of what led him to choose the ministry for his profession, but he once told a friend that the Reverend Henry Ware had more influence over him in this choice than any one else. I do not believe he ever considered any other profession; indeed, as some one has said, he could hardly help himself, so numerous were the ministers among his ancestors.

Mr. G. A. Ward wrote, December 20, 1842: "We are much pleased to hear so favorably of Cousin William's health and that he is preparing himself for the Church; five of his ancestors on his mother's side adorned that profession, at the head of whom was the 'Matchless Mitchell' of Cambridge, Mr. Porter of Medford, Mr. Newman of Rehoboth, Mr. Sparhawk of Bristol, and Mr. Sparhawk of Salem!"

To these can be added on his father's side George Phillips, the first minister of Watertown. Still farther back, on his mother's side, was Henry Sewall who was settled at Tunworth and at Baddesley in England. "His father was mayor

of Coventry about 1590. I sailed for home from Southampton," Mr. White wrote to Dr. James Martineau many years later, "little recking that this clerical ancestor and Richard Dummer, another ancestor, sailed back and forth again and again from that same port for America."

My father was not only drawn to the ministry by the deeper side of his nature, which made the life of the spirit so very real that the many trials he had to meet were faced by him throughout his long life as a minister with unfailing courage and unquestioning faith, but his intense interest in human nature and his never-failing sympathy made a pleasure of what is sometimes drudgery to a less fortunately constituted nature. To one with his sensitive temperament and acute power of suffering with others, the sadder parts of a minister's life were peculiarly hard; but he was so religious, in the truest sense of the word, that he was always able to turn from the tragedies of suffering and death, and be equally ready to share in the laughter and happiness of little children, and in the joy of young men and women; while throughout his ninety years his enjoyment in the world of nature and in books never flagged.

In his class of thirteen in the Divinity School

he had several warm friends. Chief among them was Henry F. Bond, with whom he had taken the voyage to India; another lifelong friend was George M. Bartol, who was settled for fifty years in Lancaster, Massachusetts. Thomas Hill and John F. Moors were also friends, as well as classmates. He had a pleasant acquaintance with some of the men in the other classes, including Joseph Henry Allen, Octavius Brooks Frothingham, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and Grindall Reynolds.

This is the only letter that I find during the period of his life at the Divinity School.

To D. A. W.

CAMBRIDGE, *Tuesday, April* 1, 1845.
(No bad intentions on this date.)

DEAR FATHER: —

. . . Hill,[1] Henry's classmate in college and mine now, gives a Sunday-School address Fast afternoon, for Mr. Thompson's school. If you have nothing better to do, I would hear him. He will call on you and the rest, Thursday. If it is before dinner, he will repay your inviting him to dine.

[1] Rev. Thomas Hill, president of Harvard College from 1862 to 1868.

He is quite original and thinks for himself; and in spite of some eccentricities, there is no young man coming forward, whom, for myself, on the whole, I should prefer as a minister.

He can give you an account of a sermon we heard from Father Taylor Sunday morning. His chapel was crowded with as many as five hundred sailors and he was listened to most attentively. He spoke about the crucifixion and resurrection. I had never heard him before and was more struck than I thought I should be. . . .

A week ago to-day, Tuesday evening, I went to a party at Mrs. Abbot Lawrence's; it was of mixed ages and a "talking party." So I enjoyed it. . . . Some people are troubled at the idea of the branch railroad from Somerville, which will come (nearer Dr. Palfrey's house) between Dr. P.'s house and Divinity Hall and enter somewhere near Cambridge Common. The Charter (Dr. Palfrey was urgent for it) was obtained this winter, though ye Cambridge people rather oppose it. They are to use horse-power from Cambridge to Somerville till they join the regular Charlestown road.

Our studies with Dr. Noyes in Interpretation and Dogmatics continue as last term. We have lectures in Pastoral Theology and exercises in

Church Polity, etc., with Dr. Francis. I am looking up a dissertation (another critical exercise which we have) for Dr. Noyes this week on "The errors of ye early Christians in the interpretation of the Scriptures." And some from their passion for allegorizing are strange enough. One writer finds in the meat which the ravens brought Elijah a type of the wood of the *Cross* which the Jews furnished as food for the nations; and in the ravens a similitude to those Jews, who cried in a harsh voice all at once like ravens, — "Crucify him! Crucify him!" . . .

Believe me, in haste, with love to Mother and the rest, dear father,

Your aff. son,

WILLIAM.

CHAPTER V

EASTPORT AND ST. LOUIS

1846–1847

Mr. White's first parish was in Eastport, Maine, where he preached for five months. Although he went there in April, it was still winter, and his description of the journey sounds as if he were travelling in the Arctic regions. He thus writes to his father and mother: —

April 17, '46. *Friday Afternoon.*

I arrived at Bangor soon after 9 A.M. Wednesday. It was snowing fast. The banks of the river and the wharves at Bangor made one feel as if he had struck upon the North Pole, so huge were the fragments of ice, as large as shoemakers' shops piled along together; and the snowstorm rather strengthened the geographical illusion.

The journey from Bangor to Eastport was accomplished by stage, and he did not reach Eastport until the middle of the next night. The letter goes on as follows: —

"The contrast between my comfort this morn-

ing (I have unpacked and arranged everything) and my lonely groping about the cold dark tavern last night is very great. I feel that I shall be quiet here, and if I am well, be likely to improve, under the discipline and responsibility. . . .

"I have just looked in on Mr. K.'s family, only one or two in the room at the time, and have seen the church with him. It is so beautifully dressed with evergreens that it would do you good to see it. There has been no service there since a week or two *before* Christmas, and therefore the trimmings remain. There are many appropriate mottoes of Scripture in evergreen, and festoons reaching from one end of the building to the other, meeting at the centre, etc., etc. And whole trees stand in different parts. It is an oldish-fashioned church. I like the looks of it."

The church is still standing, dominating the view, for it is on a hilltop, and its slender spire can be seen from the water as one approaches the seaport town of Eastport.

His five months were varied by more than one "exchange," for he counted the long journeys as merely a pleasant variety. In Eastport his parishioners were varied, including all social grades. He had a hearty and genuine interest in human nature,

and his sympathies went out to all, for he recognized character wherever he found it, and especially enjoyed his intercourse with those in the humbler walks of life.

His letters from Eastport give a pleasant chronicle of his life there; his sermon writing (he preached twice every Sunday), and his parish calls, were interspersed with walks and expeditions. One of his excursions had a disastrous termination; he writes as follows: —

EASTPORT, MAINE,
Friday afternoon, June 12, '46.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER: —

Monday, Mr. Tinkham and I had devoted in our minds to a wagon and fishing excursion of a day to Boyden's Lake and Pembroke some twenty miles or more off. We proceeded six and a half very comfortably, and then met with an accident, which I mention lest you may hear of it, as something fresh, a week or two hence. I found myself all at once tossed out upon the ground (we had been going at a medium rate and were in the midst of talk) and saw the horse running on with the fore wheels. I turned to inquire of Mr. T. what it all meant, and found him stretched with his face to the ground insensible. (As I found afterwards

the pin or bolt of the wagon had come out — the nut falling first — and this occasioned the accident.) I raised him up, and after washing the blood from his face, which was considerably bruised, he was able to take my arm to a house not far off. But of the accident and the walk he remembered nothing until he found himself on a bed in the house. As he was driving, he probably pulled the rein as the horse started and thus came to the ground with greater force. I got a man to take Mr. T. back, but by that time he was so much better as to be able to wait till a blacksmith close by had mended our wagon.

To D. A. W.

June 12, 1846.

I preached on Sunday morning the sermon I said I was writing the week before about "sorrowing not without hope" and in the afternoon, "Drink water out of thine own cistern," etc., which I wrote some months ago but never preached before. As the Orthodox minister is absent for a time, several of his people were at meeting, among them the Misses Andrews, sisters of the Consul, who live here. . . . Monday afternoon, having been shut up with but little exercise for several days,

I sailed with Mr. Tinkham to Deer Island. After landing we walked three miles and back, and had a delightful time. The island was better cultivated than we'd supposed, and we ascended two hills, each of which gave us beautiful views of the bay and islands. We found (7th September) excellent raspberries. (N.B. I ate green peas that day at dinner.) Our sail home was not so pleasant, as we were caught in the fog, but we returned in season to take tea at Miss Andrews's with the Consul here, and Mr. Noyes's family. That morning Mr. Hobbs took me in a boat to Campobello, and introduced me to Captain Owen's wife, and his daughter, Mrs. Robinson. The captain was away. He owns Campobello, and is a remarkable character in his way. The family live in considerable style there.

On September 3, 1846, Mr. White received a unanimous call to the pulpit in Eastport. The committee said in part: —

"In the arduous and elevated position of their religious teacher you have been alike distinguished for the zeal, learning, and great ability with which you have unfolded and illustrated religious truth and for a beautiful and impressive exhibition of

the fruits of the Christian faith in your own character and life.

"If, as they learn with great regret, your health is such as to render it injudicious for you to hazard an exposure to the rigors of our winter climate, they earnestly desire you to remain with them as long during the autumn as you may deem safe and would be highly gratified to receive from you an assurance that you would return to them in the early spring of the coming year."

When his five months at Eastport came to an end, he decided to take a little trip through the Provinces before he went home. He thus describes his leave-taking on September 9th in a letter written from St. John two days later: —

"Tuesday I made, morning and afternoon, several calls on people at the outskirts of the town; and in the evening eighteen on people nearer, to whom I merely said good-bye. I had no cause to complain of meeting with a cold reception. . . . I left at eight. Several gentlemen were at the wharf to bid me good-bye, among them, Mr. Brooks, the young Baptist minister. I put up the 'salmon and peas' in my carpetbag, and sent home some dilapidated articles of clothing, by way of ballast."

To D. A. W.

AMHERST, CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NOVA SCOTIA,
Monday, September 21, 1846.

It was morning before we arrived at Digby, as there was so much fog that the North America was obliged to "lie to" during the night. Digby Basin and the narrow passage called "Digby Gut" are quite picturesque. We arrived at Annapolis at about 9 A.M. . . . When I found that the mail was carried in an open wagon, and was out all night, I regretted the less not being able to obtain a seat in it. I was unwilling, at the same time, to wait for the "coach" on Tuesday. So I saw my trunk "booked" to go by the coach, and taking a few articles with me, I set out about half-past 3 P.M. to walk to Bridgetown, fifteen miles, which place I reached about 8 P.M., and was comfortably entertained at Mr. Quirk's inn. The afternoon was delightful. The opposite side of the river (Annapolis River), Granville, is very fertile and is overhung by a long ridge of mountainous land which shuts out the Bay of Fundy. The town of Annapolis is very much like a pretty English village. I was much pleased with it. As I had read about its eventful early history, at the time when it was the key to both provinces, and

changed hands so frequently, in Judge Haliburton's history, I was interested in walking over the old ramparts. Part of the country between there and Bridgetown has an older look than any I have yet seen. A place called "Round Hill" reminded me a good deal of parts of Beverly and Danvers. About three miles of the way I walked with a shoemaking apprentice, who told me of his manner of life.

. . . At about sunset (the next day) I found myself by a blazing wood fire, and in the interior of a rude house, but where I had a better opportunity of seeing country life as it was there, than in three times as many inns.

That same autumn Mr. White went to St. Louis to supply Mr. William G. Eliot's pulpit, while he was in Europe. It was at this time that he first began to write to Margaret Eliot Harding, although they had known each other ever since they were children. She was the youngest daughter of Chester Harding, the artist, who was at that time living in Springfield, then a country town. Mr. White used often to go there to visit his sister Eliza, Mrs. William Dwight. It was there, too, that his beloved cousin Amelia, the

wife of the Reverend W. B. O. Peabody, was living.

After his arrival in St. Louis Mr. White thus gives an account of an adventure he had on his journey: —

To M. E. H.

St. Louis, *Friday, November* 13, 1846.

. . . I am tempted half to doubt, too, whether you have not anticipated me in the article of being snagged. . . . There was probably no danger in our case, yet the apprehension hinted at by some of the boat's officers, that she might slide back from the sandbar upon which she was — by the action of the sand and swift current — into the deeper water where she had struck the snag, made us all glad and grateful to find ourselves safe on shore.

There was something rather wild and picturesque in the group that was gathering about twilight on the sand beach round a blazing pile of faggots. There were hunters leaning on their rifles; German emigrants; soldiers; travellers of the more usual description, and little children pushing their cold hands in between the company. All were looking right into the fire, as if they ex-

pected to hear it say or do something. There is a singular attraction in fire. Its drawing people's hearts and sympathies together was somewhat illustrated in the present case, and perhaps it had some share in that, when afterwards at a neighboring farmhouse some thirty or forty of us stretched ourselves on benches and the floor; and a large wood fire spread its light and warmth all night long over the circle. . . . There was another man of some intelligence, who was relieved to find that Unitarians had anything to do with the New Testament, and on my assuring him that they did *not* reject it, he replied, "Then you've been very much traduced."

Although my father thus makes light of the occurrence, I think it must have been this same incident which he described to me. When the boat first struck the snag the captain was absolutely dazed and one of the passengers took command. He had a forceful character and promptly decided that the women and children should be saved first, sternly keeping back the selfish men who pressed forward. To the young minister the other world had never seemed so near. For a moment he had the feeling that his life in this

world was to end, and instead of having any fear, he was filled with a glorified sense of exaltation; he was sure that he was going to join the mother whom he had longed to see. Suddenly, however, he remembered his father and felt that he was still needed here. He stepped forward into the range of vision of the man who had taken command, and was soon called upon to take his place in one of the boats.

He thus describes St. Louis:—

ST. LOUIS, *Monday, November 23*, 1846

MY DEAR COUSIN NANCY:—

St. Louis differs from Cincinnati in having forty instead of ninety thousand people. This city has a sort of unformed look; buildings are springing up in every direction and yet some parts of it look pretty old. The population in 1830 was between six and seven thousand. . . . Fourth and Fifth Streets in St. Louis are wider than any Boston streets, and have many fine residences upon them. . . . The church here has a Grecian front. There are about two hundred and fifty to three hundred people in the morning; in the afternoon, it is always thin. They all seem devotedly attached to Mr. Eliot. . . .

To M. E. H.

St. Louis, *Monday, January* 11, 1847.

. . . I spoke of Mrs. K., which led her to speak of you; and she said that "it was like the sun in a spring morning to have your face look in on her, after a long day's confinement at school." She is living in a comfortable house, though in plain style. These (that is, the halls, and parlors, etc.) are not the "circumstances" of which you speak, when you say it is easier to be independent of them in theory than in practice. I sometimes fancy that I have a sort of indifference to these things, that I could not once have supposed I should, and which, if it exist, is owing to having seen in different countries so much real happiness where there was no style; and to the influence of my profession on my thoughts. It is harder to make one's self equally happy among whatever people one may be thrown. This, indeed, should it occur literally, would seem to leave no room for the development of affection. But to a certain extent the theory is worth carrying out. I sometimes think that the hardest "circumstances" any one can be called to contend with are those concerned more or less directly with ill health. At times of perfect health, how everything, everywhere, brightens!

And yet religious effort and patience must do more, in the long run, than anything.

To M. E. H.

QUINCY, ILLINOIS,
Wednesday, March 10, 1847.

As for my profession — I enjoy it, but not being of a very enthusiastic nature, I do not strictly "find it" (as you ask) "grow dearer to me every day I live." I take this comfort, however, that my ideal of it is always before my attainment; and ever find a sort of satisfaction in thinking that I do not love it so well as I ought to; as it will give me something to be doing in time to come; and I may grow warmer rather than colder. One's interest must be very different in a settled parish — or rather in a parish over which he is settled. . . .

In writing to M. E. Harding April 12, 1847, contrasting his life in St. Louis with that of Eastport he says: —

"I used to walk — generally taking the same road (for it was as much as ever that there was more than one) — about noon, half across the island, passing by the same too familiar houses, but always in sight of the familiar sea and silver firs and blue islands; I enjoyed the somewhat

coziness of the parishional intercourse I had at Eastport; here, there are advantages which there were not there. The "field" in preaching, at least, seems larger. Men probably have more temptations. Then there is more to excite the mind; more to catch the eye abroad; I have seen no place that would be exactly to my mind, to pass my life in. But I feel more and more as if it would not make, comparatively, a very great difference. One place will have advantages that are denied another; and there ought to be some "crook in the lot," or everything would be so fine as to become insipid.

The peach trees have been since 4th April coming into full blossom, and now the plum trees are coming along too. The grass is beautifully green just outside the city. I think I never saw more luxuriant verdure so widely spread.

To M. E. H.

ST. LOUIS, *April* 25, 1847.

In taking a ride just outside the town yesterday, the beautiful landscape showed such a contrast with the dry city that it seemed as if no painting, were it ever so costly, could give one greater pleasure. And yet this scene was hidden

to the great majority of the citizens. Why? Because they would not be at the pains (it was within the compass of no weary walk) of putting themselves in the way of seeing it. And yet I aver that in point of happiness, at that moment, there was as decided a preponderance in my favor as could very well be. So that when all social distinctions are levelled, there may still be, in one way or another, differences in individual comfort against which we cannot provide.

In a postscript to a letter written to his father on April 13, 1847, from St. Louis he says: —

"I take an additional page to speak about flour. Mr. Crow was speculating (if you think I am going to talk of a business transaction, you are out) on the probable effect to this country of the transfer of so many millions of dollars from Europe here. He said that all the farmers here would feel it. For instance, Indian corn (or corn-meal, I am not sure which) often had sold at Fremont for fifteen cents; it was at thirty-five or forty there now; and at fifty-five a bushel at St. Louis. I asked whether it would not make the people more glad to support education, etc. He thought it would, in the end. The first effect

would be to make them think they must have better houses. When their style of living was somewhat changed, they would then see and feel the advantage and necesssity of providing good instruction, etc., for their children. He thinks corn-meal must now be a staple; and that before many years it may be Wall Street that controls the London market rather than London that. Is it not interesting also to view the probable effect on England of transferring so large a portion of her wealth to America? How will it fare with the tithes — what will happen to the nobility — must they not work — will they be able to hold such large estates in their own hands? All this is on the supposition that what has been thrown out is true, that at any rate, for some time, the great demand for breadstuffs must continue. . . .

Mr. Crow thinks the influx of Germans and others will influence the decision of the Slavery question here, as they will all have a vote; and be desirous of abolishing the institution, in time."

To M. E. H.

ST. LOUIS, *May* 10, 1847.

. . . Just think of our running away on our trip with a Methodist preacher's horse, and a black boy

riding six miles to recover it! Luckily it was Mr. C. that rode the animal, though I shared in the plunder by averring that I thought it was his. It was a dark morning, and the host brought out the wrong beast. . . .

To M. E. H.

St. Louis, *Monday, May* 24, 1847.

I went on Friday afternoon to the "landing" on the Illinois, to await a boat. I waited with another passenger from 6 P.M. till 3 A.M. at the landing in a small room occupied by eighteen persons — workmen on a boat that was building. Snatching some brands from a fisherman's fire blazing on the shore, we swung them in the air, and the steamboat herald knew our signal and sent a boat for us. Our chance for sleeping was not much better than before, as we now had only the cabin floor and a mattress. Saturday turned out, however, to be a beautiful day and I enjoyed what I saw of the Illinois River. . . .

Your speaking of E. P.'s consulting you brings to my mind a clerk on board the boat that day, with whom I was talking, and who fell to telling me about himself, what he said he had told to none of them who were ordinarily with him on

board. I hope I was able to suggest some thought which may help to make him more comfortable. He was a cheery, kind-hearted fellow who would pay when he could little afford it the fares of some of the emigrants when they besought him. But he seemed to make out that his life was somewhat clouded withal. The incident served to make me feel how much there is to live for, if, as we move about in the world, we can so quickly find those who are better for our sympathy or counsel.

M. E. H. TO W. O. W.

Your little incident on the steamboat was a pleasant one. I can imagine how it must have *happified* you to feel you had been able to cheer any one by a word of sympathy. Like a true daughter of Mother Eve, I wanted to know what it was had overshadowed the young man's life. As you say, we have much to live for, if we can so easily cheer the sorrowing. My greatest dread in growing old is in the fear that one's sympathies may wear out with the body. They ought not to, for they are immortal, but we so constantly see that they do. . . .

Mr. White was most painfully impressed when

he was in St. Louis by seeing some slaves sold. He writes thus: —

"Upon the steps of the Court House in that crowded city was that mother sold. The helpless children were next brought forward by the brutal auctioneer with a heartless jest. When they too had been sold, the purchaser of the mother said that for the sake of preventing her separation from the children he would take them too at the price which their purchaser had given. He was refused, for he spoke to one in whom the love of money was far stronger than the instincts of common humanity.

"Need we picture the future career of those children, henceforth in supreme and undisturbed possession of such a creature? It is enough to know that in a Christian country the law permits to parents and children such a living death. Is there no mystery in the ways of man as well as God? Are there no dark counsels but those of Providence?"

On his way back from St. Louis he went through Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia, visiting the Mammoth Cave, the Natural Bridge, Charlottesville, Richmond, and other places of interest.

EASTPORT AND ST. LOUIS

KENTUCKY, *Saturday, 12 June, 1847.*

The Ohio boats were all very much crowded about the time I left St. Louis, and therefore it was peculiarly pleasant to be on our quiet little Cumberland craft, the Josephine, with just enough passengers sprinkled in separate state-rooms, through the cabin, to make the scene pleasant. . . . I find a surprising relief, after being, for months together, engaged in duties like those at Eastport and St. Louis, in throwing them all up, and being like a child among the birds and trees. I hope, wherever I may be settled, to have a month or two in every summer to play outdoors in, on stages or steamboats, or in the mountains. . . . And now let me take up what remains of time and paper in speaking of the Cave. I have been amply repaid by my visit there. I never felt the reality of a place more vividly. I have often felt before, "I ought to feel so and so." "Why don't I realize this more?" But I felt the scene as much as I wanted to here. Mr. Heywood says it ought not to be called a "cave." I was reminded as much as anything of my wandering through the mountain passes of Switzerland; and I seemed to be there again, only at midnight and groping along by torchlight. Every now and then

in the darkness, the lofty dome of the cave seemed to be the outer firmament. In one instance, "the star chamber," a room spangled with crystals of spar, you seem to see the stars twinkling outdoors. But being paddled across a river a quarter of a mile long there, after having walked three miles and a half, and having some five to walk after you crossed it — is n't there something a little grand in this? One might think of Charon, "of the dark valley of the shadow of death," and many things. The echoes of our singing guide's voice swelled finely over the water; the crags on either side the water, and the deep shadows that hurried in the lamplight across them added to the strange and mournful wildness of the scene. I do not know when I have seen any natural wonder which has touched me at so many points as this. It was wild and unearthly. To stand in the temple where three thousand might be seated on the broken rocks, and see the whole scene lighted up by a Bengal light for a few moments; to think how little one would imagine there was a bright and beautiful world without, who had been living only down there; and then to hear the black slave raise his voice and sing, at my suggestion, a "religious tune" beginning: —

Why do we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are:
Death is the gate to endless bliss
And yet we fear to enter there!

All this was solemn. The first day I was eight hours in the cave, and the second eight and a half, seeing different parts.

To M. E. H.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, VA.,
Sunday, June 20, 1847.

Friday the scenery was beautiful; like that in New Hampshire; and I sometimes thought finer; though the Franconia Notch would stay much longer in one's memory, as I now find. But I don't like these comparisons, else I might allow having seen the Alps to spoil both; or not having seen the Himalayas to spoil all three. It would be — this Western Virginia — a fine country to travel through on horseback. About 4 P.M. we passed "the hawk's nest"; a famous view, which Miss Martineau was so impressed with, and which you may have heard of. New River bends in some beautiful curves and foams away, some say, five hundred and fifty, some eight hundred or a thousand feet below you, and hills and forests

are stretching away above one another in the distance. There is nothing of the kind so fine in this country.

WASHINGTON, *June* 27, 1847.

We reached the [Natural] Bridge just about sundown and had an hour and a half to enjoy it in. I was far from being disappointed in it; and felt at once that of itself it repaid me for having taken my Virginia route. After viewing it from below, and from above, I took with another young man a place in "the car," which is safer than it seems, and made the descent of two hundred and fifteen feet. It seemed some time before we reached the top of the arch; then it was very interesting to watch it gradually expanding. About halfway down it seemed in the most round and full proportions. But it gradually and gracefully rose in height, until we saw it again from the ground. On the inside of the ceiling of the arch is the representation of an eagle in the natural stone; which seemed interesting in a national point of view. They show a lion there too. The proportions of the arch are graceful and beautiful; and the whole thing stupendous. I was sorry I could not be there a day. There are only tri-weekly routes on many of these roads.

CHAPTER VI

MARRIAGE AND WEST NEWTON

1848–1850

William Orne White and Margaret Eliot Harding were married September 25, 1848. In writing of him to a friend before her marriage my mother characterized him as "a friend whose motives are the very highest, and whose whole life is subject to spiritual laws."

Their first parish was at West Newton, where he was ordained as minister on November 22, 1848, "at half-past twelve o'clock at noon." Although West Newton was for all practical purposes so much farther away from Boston than it is now, the distance was easily bridged by the many devoted friends and relations who came to see them, and in one of his letters, besides speaking of several such visitors, the young minister records the fact that his wife had three invitations in one afternoon to go on sleigh rides, which fact "seemed truly ominous of the decay of the sleighing."

Their interests were varied, for he speaks of a

lecture by Ralph Waldo Emerson on England, and of the meeting of a geology class. That same winter they had the great pleasure of hearing Fanny Kemble read "The Merchant of Venice." The hours were good old-fashioned ones, for they "were dismissed just in season to walk to our 9.30 P.M. cars."

The moving into their own house was a great delight to them. He writes to his father as follows: —

WEST NEWTON, *Monday, June* 4, 1849.

We have enjoyed particularly coming into the house just at this time, when all the doors and windows can be opened and we can sit down in any room we choose. I preached at home yesterday. Next Sunday I exchange with Edward Hale.

To R. H. W.

WEST NEWTON, *Tuesday, June* 19, 1849.

The Parish party, which took place the week after you left us, was very pleasant, and it quite filled our rooms. Two or three evenings after, we had a smaller circle of friends who met to talk on more religious things. On Sunday previous, I preached, from "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house," upon the true con-

secration of a new home. As several of our families have but just come into their new houses, it seemed to interest them. . . .

Our hotel here is to be a Temperance one, certainly for the season; and we trust, when the experiment is fairly made, will continue to be. So all persons who want to board in the country may be well off there. We are glad of the change, as the matter has been cause of much discussion at meetings down in the village for some time. After circulating, ineffectually so far as the new landlord was concerned, a paper in which we promised to aid him so far as we could in getting boarders, and in hiring horses, etc., if he would keep a Temperance House, it was thought time (it being in the mean time discovered that he was selling liquor) to go upon another tack. So another paper was started in which we said we would hire no horses there unless it should be indispensably necessary; and that we would do what we could to discountenance the place. A committee was moreover appointed to act with the committee appointed at Spring Town Meeting for prosecuting infringements of the liquor-selling law. Before this paper had run a very long round, news came that the new landlord had pledged himself

to make the experiment of keeping a Temperance House. He came here in fact with such an intention, but was misled by persons who told him that he could not get along if he did so; and that people would not be disturbed, if he merely kept a private bar, etc., etc.

To D. A. W.

WEST NEWTON, 31 *December*, 1849.

I heard a few days since from Mr. A. P. Peabody, who proposes postponing our exchange — on account of "the uncalculableness of January weather, and the strong probability that with ice on the ferry way, or some other obstruction, I might fail of the evening Newton cars — to the second Sunday in March.

If travelling was a little more arduous in those days, this drawback was balanced by it being decidedly cheaper. My father thus speaks of a journey that he and my mother took to the Delaware Water Gap: —

WEST NEWTON,
Saturday, September 28, 1850.

The drive through the Gap by moonlight was very fine. Although the Gap was forty-odd miles farther off than I supposed when we left home,

the journey was accomplished for the precise sum I took with me. Considering we had so many pleasant rides, besides the car jerking, thirty-five dollars apiece does not seem very much out of the way for a fortnight's absence on a journey of between three and four hundred miles.

M. E. W. TO D. A. W. AND R. H. W.

WEST NEWTON, *Tuesday, October* 15, 1850.

. . . Reading, as you must have, about the fuss at the Concert on Saturday, I thought you would desire to know whether we were there then. We were not. We went on Friday evening, and enjoyed it exceedingly, though, perhaps, on account of extraneous influences, not quite as much as we expected. Jenny Lind's voice is wonderful. I would not but have heard her for anything, and she is herself a charming, fascinating person, more light and gay in her look and manner than I expected. We had quite a good seat, and were comfortably situated — but I am so thankful we were not there on Saturday night. Those who were there describe it as a fearful scene. It is a disgrace to Boston — poor Jenny seemed very much agitated, and sent out word to the mobbers, those who could not get seats, that if they would only

keep quiet and depart, she herself would be responsible for the money they had paid for their tickets. This quieted them for a while. I don't feel in the least satisfied with hearing Jenny once; I want to go and live with her and hear her sing every day for a month, and then I think I could begin to understand and appreciate her extraordinary powers. I hope some of you have heard her. It is only once in a lifetime such a nightingale visits our northern shores.

To M. E. W.

GREENFIELD, *May* 11.

I cannot proceed further in this epistle without entering a protest against my neighbor who is reading his Bible. He read away last Sunday afternoon for two hours, and now he seems to be getting along under full sail again. Why does he think it so much more edifying to read every word so loud? So much publicity, as far as I am concerned, is gained by his procedure that I do not think he would fall any more under the condemnation of Scripture if he read it "at the corners of the streets"; and such a change of arrangements on his part would really be altogether more convenient and agreeable to me.

While they were in West Newton Mrs. White had a call from one of her old Springfield friends who asked her if she did not "find it very dull out here." She said: "It was a natural question, and yet it shows how little he understands what makes the real happiness of life. Dull, with my dear husband close at my side, with my dear little house, my friends all around me, all my parish duties, my opportunities for helping the sick or the poor! When I feel well and bright my life seems almost a foretaste of a heavenly one."

CHAPTER VII

EARLY YEARS IN KEENE

1851–1861

In the year 1851 Mr. White received a call from the Unitarian Parish in Keene, New Hampshire. He had already been captivated by the beauty of the place and the cultivation of its inhabitants, for he had made a delightful visit there some years earlier at the house of his friend, George S. Hale.

After their first visit to Keene Mr. White says in a letter to his wife: "Many inquiries are made about you by people within and without the house. If it were you rather than I that had been candidating, I should say that you had made a decidedly successful trip."

He was settled in Keene, October 1, 1851. A little before this event Mrs. White thus writes: "Every one greets us cordially, and my heart bounds at the idea of having so beautiful a home." "Oh, how lovely the valley looked as we entered it!" she wrote a month later, when she went back to make Keene her permanent home; and then

follows an account of the neighborliness of their new friends, nine of their parishioners coming to help make and put down the carpets. She says: "They did not leave me until every carpet was made and down and every room in order. . . . Mrs. Ingersoll came in the afternoon and brought me baked apples and doughnuts, and in the evening Mrs. George Twitchell sent me a basket of magnificent nectarines, peaches, and grapes. William came at four, and the ladies had his study all in order for him, stove and all."

The following extracts from Mr. White's letters give a vivid idea of his various interests: —

To D. A. W. AND R. H. W.

KEENE, *October* 31, 1851.

. . . I met Mr. Crosby for ten minutes at the station in Keene on Monday, and he said he had never seen a fuller house in Keene than on last Sunday. Mr. Prentiss thought I must have been visiting pretty faithfully through the week, which was the case. I have now made upwards of a hundred calls, and shall soon have seen almost every adult in the parish. Some of the men I have to seek at their stores and workshops. . . . The Sewing Circle came out in pretty good force, near

fifty ladies being there. In the evening the gentlemen dropped in.

A little later in the year he writes: —

KEENE, *Thursday, December* 18, 1851.

Did you know that we in Keene are nearer Boston now than you in Salem are? It is so, for we have the telegraph in full operation. For twenty-five cents we can send a message to Boston. If you only had a telegraph from Boston to Salem, we would try talking together, to see how it would seem. . . .

I have taken to splitting wood and "bringing of it in" lately, which I find very good exercise.

. . . We expect a service Christmas Eve according to custom in our church.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *March* 23, 1852.

. . . I have been appointed one of the "Superintending School Committee," the Orthodox and the Baptist clergymen forming the remainder of the Committee. We have the examining teachers and schools to do. There are about fifteen schools, giving about five apiece. I shall take it for this year, it will enable me to get better acquainted with

Margaret E. White at the age of twenty-six

From a painting by Chester Harding in 1849

Margaret E. White

the children. We receive twenty dollars, which I believe will pay expenses.

On one occasion when he was on the School Committee, he went to call on a young woman who was to begin to teach for the first time the following Monday in one of the public schools. She confided to him how she was dreading it and that she feared that she should fail as a teacher. "Stop right there," he said; "you never will succeed if you let yourself feel like that." And years afterwards she told him what an incentive his words had been to her. The fact that he had such faith in the inherent power of human nature was what gave him so much influence both as a preacher and a pastor.

To M. E. W.

SALEM, *April* 2, 1852.

I had a pleasant trip to Boston and reached the city at twenty-five minutes before seven. How glad I was that my lot was not cast there! What gangs of dirty little swearing children not nine years old I had to pass through on my way to the Eastern Railroad! I should think Boston people would have enough to do one of these days to

take care of them, if they do not find any time to do so now. Having a half-hour to spare I took my tea in Boston and reached Salem in good season by the 7.20 P.M. train. Going over in the ferry was really exhilarating in the mild spring evening with the moon rolling about in the water and the good old salt smell of the sea again.

To M. E. W.

The crocuses in our garden have been in fine bloom for some eleven days, the grass all around us is deepening its green, and spring has really come. Monadnock, however, still keeps its snow, which gives quite an Alpine tinge to our landscape, and makes our fields look all the greener.

In commenting on the business reverses of a friend he says: —

To M. E. W.

KEENE, *June* 15.

. . . And now let me turn to what has been so much in my mind, as I know that it must have been in yours. It is what we cannot hear of without pain, but I cannot regard such changes as "sad," or "melancholy," or "dreadful," when there are so many things that are much more so. G. W. says

that J. has the sympathy and regret of the community. Where no loss of honor or character is involved, such reverses seem but transient, as indeed even in a worldly view, to a person so indefatigable as J., they must be. I am glad to hear that he bears up nobly, and goes on as if nothing had happened, while at the same time he has shown no wish to keep anything back, but is perfectly frank and open with all who have any right to know about the matter. Of the full extent of their loss, of course I have not the means of knowing, but even if it involve the breaking up of habitations, etc., how much easier to bear than if it were the death of a husband or wife! Where there is true affection, wealth must seem for a time a thing of no account, when, with it, one cannot gratify the wants or the eye of the friend most dear. But the privations and the toil which pecuniary troubles may involve, so long as two hearts bear them together, may only bind these hearts the closer. Our own comparatively simple mode of life may have led us to feel that it would not be a dreadful thing to be poor; and perhaps this is the reason why we are still blessed with enough. It may be that our trials must come from another direction. Possibly these changes may

bring to some persons, and it would be strange if not to everybody, a discipline in the way of character which is "more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold."

The following letter was written to his nephew, Henry Wilder Foote, who was afterwards minister of King's Chapel, father of the present Reverend Henry Wilder Foote: —

KEENE, *June* 1, 1852.

DEAR HENRY —

Fourteen years old!

Why, how soon you must take your place among the men! When the time comes for you to do so, I hope you will show yourself a man, indeed. Till then you have enough to do in being faithful to the duties which each day brings with it, without looking too anxiously forward to what may lie beyond. In determining your arithmetical problems, it is a poor way to proceed, to jump forward to the answer, which may stand printed in the book, and wonder how it was obtained. The only way to do, you well know, is to move forward step by step, and understand what you do, till by and by you guide yourself along to the answer. Very much so it is with the answer which one of these days you

will be giving to the problem, "For what purpose am I living here in this world?"

Your conduct, the spirit with which you enter into your occupation, your whole character, — this will be the answer which you will be giving to the problem of life. Be careful, then, my dear boy, to ponder well each little step which is leading you to your answer. Be obliged to retrace no step. I think that you have tried to understand the steps which you have been taking, so far. And now on this June second, another milestone is set up in your journey. Many more will be set up for you, year by year, I hope, in this beautiful valley of earth, but it matters not greatly whether there are many more or not, so far as you are concerned, provided you are constantly preparing yourself to give the true answer to the problem which God calls upon us all to solve. It matters not greatly, I say, for if each step in your work is carefully taken, even though you be interrupted in it, you can begin elsewhere where you left off here, and arrive at the complete answer in a better world than this.

With my love to your sister and to your father and mother, I send you my best wishes for a happy year, and with them this birthday present which I hereby invest you with the power of causing to

take whatever shape you or the shopkeepers may please.

If Aunt Meggie were in town, she would send her love.

Your affectionate
UNCLE WILLIAM.

In describing their first parish party given in honor of the former minister, Mrs. White writes to Miss Hale as follows: —

September 23, 1852.

One night we lighted up our house, and opened four rooms on the lower floor, and invited the whole society to spend the evening, and the house was thronged. I wish you could have seen how beautifully the house looked. We had quantities of flowers sent in, and they were put everywhere, where there was a place for them. It was very pleasant and encouraging, too, to see how the people love Mr. Livermore; there was a sort of festival held all the time he was here. He preached one Sunday to an overflowing house.

William has been very well since we got back, and is enjoying riding on horseback very much, this fall. He has the occasional use of the horses of two of his parish.

W. O. W. TO D. A. W.

KEENE, *October* 29, 1852.

. . . The news of Mr. Webster's illness fell on us as on everybody solemnly and suddenly. The people here have taken it quietly, however. It seems as if, even in death, the sort of difference that existed between him and Clay could be traced. Everybody must go down to Marshfield, an exceedingly out-of-the-way place, who would see the dignified statesman in the dignified repose of death. The grave did not receive the body of Mr. Clay until it had lingered at numerous towns and villages to give the people a convenient opportunity of paying their tribute of respect. Had Mr. Webster died in the way Mr. Clay did, had he taken near a whole year for it, his departure could not have created the sensation which it has. It is no evidence that Mr. Webster was popular, the outburst of regret which now arises. The people were more proud of him than of any other man, though they loved others of inferior gifts more. The account of his last hours was profoundly touching. For his fame, to die in office, and to die before men could be wonted to the thought, and just when nothing but a retirement of chagrin was before him — is just the most desirable thing. But if he had died three

years ago, how much better, we are tempted to feel. In his death we look back and see the wonderful flashing of his mind through the history of our last fifty years; — we do not feel bereft, as in the case of Taylor, however, by looking forward and feeling, as we did then, that one was taken away in the bitter time of need.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *November* 17, 1852.

You speak of the election. The two platforms were certainly very similar this year, and the Whig seemed to be approximating to the Democratic. A high tariff no longer contended for, no denouncing of the Sub-Treasury, no silence even upon the matter of slavery or its extension, whether through possession of Cuba or in any other way. Such a platform was hardly adapted to counteract the progress of the Democratic Party, which had been steadily coming forward since the election four years ago, for even then the Whigs only partially succeeded. I voted for Scott, but had he not been attacked for the reason that he was the choice of the majority of the New York delegates, who voted against the gag resolution in the platform, I should not have felt willing to, and could not

have voted for any one. I thought it too bad, however, that he should lose, both at the North and South, from the position in which the Convention unwarrantably placed him. It does not seem probable, however, that any course or any candidate could have prevented the Democrats succeeding this time, by some majority.

To R. H. W.

KEENE, *January* 6, 1853.

. . . We have admitted to our barn some new inhabitants. I do not now refer to our two smart kittens, for they are decidedly more addicted to the house, but to six hens that soon will be and a rooster who have had a corner set off for them by Mr. B., our chore man and Jack-at-all-trades, who hunted up the chickens and hammered together their boarding-place. Mr. B. looks in on us once or twice a week and we breathe freer for having no boy to freeze by the doorstep, or run away. One egg we have only realized the past fortnight, but the future — well, the future is sadly blotted by the tumbling over of my pen and that may indicate that the future will be eggless. I was about saying, however, that to the future we look, as in life and experience generally, for the realization of our

dreams regarding the economics of hens. They dispose of some of the crumbs which fall from our table, not sufficiently inviting to tempt any modern Lazarus. Meggie thought six an ample number, and we shall not have a family quarrel on the subject, as the seventh has died, the owner I fear, however, of the golden egg. . . .

The following letter shows that there is nothing new under the sun, whatever changes there may be in the forms of our insect pests: —

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *June* 21, 1853.

. . . Still, although our roses will be withered and our leaves less green, we shall hope that your visit in July may be pleasant to you, unless you witness the fulfilment of the Scripture that "that which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left, hath the caterpillar eaten."

True as the book, only for "locust" read "curculio," and for "palmer-worm," "currant worm," and amend by saying that if the caterpillar is to subsist on the leavings of the canker-worm, he will have but slender pickings.

Our "beautiful mild winter," so much complimented in its day, seems to have kept alive numerous eggs of divers uncouth and harmful insects who are now let abroad upon the land, cursing every green thing.

The canker-worm has been unknown till this season, but now, he (and his name is legion) is upon every apple tree, and is dividing the plum trees with the little curculio, who, faithful to the modern principle of division of labor, has always confined his labors to one description of fruit. View him now distanced, on his own ground, by this omnivorous reptile!

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *Monday, December* 5, 1853.

Meggie and I drove out two miles on that sunny afternoon to take tea by appointment at one of our parishioners', where we met three or four pleasant people from other parishes, and the "schoolmaster." Our tea went beyond any former experience. A liberal pile of bread, little saucers of citron, and also of jelly, by each plate, custards, apple tarts, cheese, gingerbread, doughnuts, and a great central Thanksgiving cake. Peter is the parrot who knows my voice. When our pilgrimage through

these various dainties was nearly completed, a pause occurring in the conversation I called aloud on Peter. Peter answered, "More!" "What!" say I to my good hostess, in jest, "Peter cannot mean that there is more coming?" "Oh, no! he means that *he* wants more." But Peter was a more cunning prophet than I supposed. In a few moments in came a large dish of walnuts and butternuts, also of apples and of parched corn.

We had a bright moonlight drive home, and I am happy to inform you that we are both alive this morning.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *March* 16, 1854.

It seems to be rather a "transition period" in temperance matters at present; but if the friends of prohibitory measures are firm and judicious, I cannot but think that within fifteen years the state of public morals will be materially better and many of our smaller towns relieved of some of the eyesores which disfigure them. If the law cannot reach these grogshops and taverns, I fear that we have seen the top wave of temperance and that it will never rise higher except at rare intervals by spasmodic efforts, or (to pursue the figure) except when

some heavy gale like that of '41 sweeps over the country. . . .

As to the schools, if put on the Committee this year, I shall feel, considering the High School, as if it would be better for our old board to work together again. When I was first chosen, I thought I would serve three years, if I were in Keene all the time, and then take a vacation. Two of the three have quickly gone. Another year, I fear, some one who has served longer will want exemption first, but while I continue in my present health, I can attend to the schools. There is nothing about them that wears upon the heart like the duties I have been called to lately. We received on Tuesday a fine box of oranges which we have enjoyed, distributing, as they mellow, among sick folks, besides eating them ourselves.

KEENE, *April* 18, 1854.

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER —

We are anxious to see Emily in our house and hope that she will stow away, if needful, some one of her children under the instep (did n't Mother Goose's old woman feel at liberty to do this when she went gadding?) and bring the rest with her, if she can pacify her conscience as a visitor more

easily thus, than by giving us the pleasure of seeing them all.

I am rejoicing this week in a week without a Fast. It seems as if the week would be fourteen days long. We have, however, a Teachers' Institute in session, and the ministers, in their double function of public characters and Committee of education, must be often seen at its sessions, which are, some of them, quite interesting.

I hear, for this month, as a special favor, the son of Colonel Adams in his Georgics and Greek Reader, for three times a week. He occupies the hour after dinner, and as he is an uncommonly pleasing and a good and intelligent lad, it does not much disturb me. The boy could not get into the High School, from his father's having left the town. It gives me a chance to renew my classics a little, and to read the Georgics for the first time.

In the summer of 1854 Mr. and Mrs. White's vacation was spent in taking a trip to Niagara Falls. They did not reach the Clifton House until nearly midnight owing to an accident to the train, but in spite of the lateness of the hour they could not resist "sallying forth in quest of a lunar rainbow." He says:—

"On and on we walked until we came to Table Rock and beyond it. We saw no rainbow, but under the full moon, we had the most exquisitely beautiful view of the falls which we have yet had. The columns of spray rose in drooping veils of silver dust high into the air, and even flew across the moon's distant face. . . . We are entirely satisfied that the Canada side is the side on which to stay. Our room opens out with its long windows upon a piazza, which, as well as the room, gives us a view of the falls as good as we could desire, and we hear that deep bass which 'rests not day nor night,' sometimes with almost painful distinctness. . . .

"After dinner, which occurs at three o'clock, we read Mrs. Stowe's beguiling book of 'Sunny Memories' on our piazza, looking up every now and then to gaze on the cataracts or down upon the 'New Maid of the Mist' as she was winding around the hem of the cataract's garment. After dinner, Meggie and I walked to the edge of the Horse-Shoe Fall on the Canada side, where there is a thick log projecting into the stream. It is a little above Table Rock. I had walked here the day before. To me it gives the finest view of the falls which I have seen. You seem to be almost within the vortex of the cataract, and the exquisitely

formed curve of the Horse-Shoe Fall nowhere so beautifully appears as here, and on the pitiful little fragment of Table Rock which remains. I far, very, very far prefer the Horse-Shoe Fall with that curve, and the evergreen water with its hoarser depths, to the American Fall. . . . When I was here in an October snowstorm on my way to St. Louis, and ill with a very bad cold, I was far from deriving as much enjoyment as now from the falls, apart from my being compelled then to see them alone. But my view then of the American Fall, as, on looking up to it, it seemed (for the snow and the fog) to touch the sky, gave me an idea of the height of the falls which no subsequent view ever equalled. The sight of the falls (which I have had twenty times since beginning this letter) is a continual joy — a perpetual feast to the eyes. They can drink deep."

It is pleasant to read of the cordial welcome that awaited them on their return from their summer vacation. Three of their special friends were at the house to greet them, one of whom took them home to supper. And the next evening several more parishioners called.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *September* 4, 1854.

Meggie has had supplies of cake, seven kinds, from five different sources, so that we may be in danger of becoming too high livers. A loaf of bread came shortly after our arrival which was more acceptable than all the cake. Sundry pies have found their way also hither, and Mr. Wheeler the evening that he came brought us butter. But the best of all is that, during our absence, there has been no severe sickness and not a single death in the parish. In contrast with the months of January and March, in one of which five, in another six, funerals occurred, we have reason to be very grateful for the health that has prevailed among us. . . .

The small-pox is creating some alarm here. They have established a pest-house about two miles off, but some of the patients prefer their own houses.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *September* 27, 1854.

I preached two new sermons last Sunday, in spite of having given three half-days to schools during the week, and my having two guests. I am glad that I have been able to preach three years without repeating a sermon, and by the time I am

compelled to do so, shall trust that they will not be too promptly recognized.

To D. A. W. AND R. H. W.

KEENE, *January* 24, 1855.

. . . At about 8.45 Mary and I were ready to set forth on our way to the Methodist festival, which was much like the Baptist ditto save the extraction of some of the more familiar stars. There were more strange faces. I was put upon a very high rostrum where I talked four or five minutes "as one beating the air," or rather (with the sea of faces beating to and fro in front) more like a struggling sailor in the waves, calling for help and not rousing any one to hear him. Those in front were attentive, but a Post-Office just opened at the side of the hall was a formidable rival, and so great was the chattering that I was soon glad to taste the sweets of obscurity and ice-cream in the throng below.

Brother Robbins next mounted, and though he excelled me in brevity, I had the malignant satisfaction of finding that even his more sonorous voice spoke no peace to those tumultuous waves. Neither did Mr. Beedle nor Mr. Prentiss enchain that wild and wandering throng. . . .

KEENE, *September* 25, 1855.

In Meggie's letter to Mary, you will hear of our very pleasant trip to Charlestown ten days since. It was a drive on Saturday afternoon of about twenty-five, and by the different road we took Monday morning in returning, of twenty-seven miles. We encountered some severe hills, but the views were exquisite, showing us Ascutney on the north and Monadnock on the south. We had plenty of blackberries, and passed through some fine woods. We were very hospitably received at our hosts' house (Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester) and dined with Mrs. Ayer (the new minister's wife) at the hotel, and took tea at Dr. Crosby's. The Sylvesters' biscuit from flour from his own New Hampshire wheat was exceedingly sweet and good. I gave out in the afternoon three hymns which were married some hundred years ago to good old tunes, and in every instance Mr. Cushing, the organist, confirmed the validity of that marriage, or rather denied the validity of any divorce, so that our "meeting" was particularly pleasant. . . .

To M. E. W.

KEENE, *January* 22, 1856.

. . . Then I trudged up to Mrs. Houghton's and talked with her and her husband while some nineteen doughnuts were fried under my nose. A most singular coincidence. As I returned the whole air was filled with the perfume of frying dough. Every house in the village must have been engaged in the operation. The clear winter air seemed poisoned. Nay, you might have thought that meteoric doughnuts had fallen from upper planets. . . .

Mrs. Houghton said, a lady had guessed that I was about thirty, and that old Mrs. Leonard used to ask about your and my age, and Mrs. H. could not enlighten her, and the centenarian had settled down into the idea that you were a year or two the elder. This I mention lest old Mr. Perry's compliments should turn your head, and because it is so rare for me to be taken for less old than I am.

KEENE, *February* 3, 1857.

. . . Having been at home throughout January, I was looking forward to an exchange on Sunday last with Mr. Ayer, of Charlestown, who arrived here about 2 P.M. But after four visits to the railroad, (thanks to the telegraph), I gave up the expedition

at 7 P.M. and made the most of Mr. Ayer's company, the exchange with whom was converted into a very agreeable labor of love on his part next day.

The morning train of Saturday for Charlestown did not reach Keene till 10 P.M. Sunday night, and did not proceed to Charlestown till Monday morning. The detention was owing to heavy snows and the subsequent rain which, when the weather grew cold again, fastened the snow to the rails. . . .

KEENE, *February* 19, 1857.

. . . I had three funeral services to attend last week. One of them occurred in church, the first funeral there since I was settled. It was the husband of a worthy woman, who has within a year lost her only child, a young man of thirty-one who died. The husband had been for a few years insane, but the wife had been hoping for his recovery. Previous to the loss of her faithful and enterprising son and the insanity of her husband, the good woman was stretched sick upon her bed for about a year. She is now able to help herself and she bears her troubles like a Christian. I preached Sunday forenoon upon resignation from the text, "O my Father, if the cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." I tried to

state what was and what was not included in this virtue, and was glad to hear Mrs. W. (the person in question) say that it had helped her to make her mind clearer on the subject. I suppose she had been fearing that she lamented too much the loss of her former joys. I said (and I most firmly believe it), in the course of the sermon, that a person who so severely felt an affliction as to lead all his friends to say that he had "never been the same person since," might have far more of true Christian resignation than a person who seemed to "bear up" much better. The fact is, some persons live infinitely more than others in the household affections. Some have few deep affections, perhaps none. Others diffuse them over a larger surface and have so many friends that they are less dependent upon the one or two or three that are essential to the identity of another person.

To R. H. W.

KEENE, *Friday, March 6,* 1857.

Mr. Buchanan's inaugural does not give us much to hope for, though we had no reason to expect that it would. It is more melancholy to see a man and a Northern man of age and experience (like him or Mr. Cass) coolly maintaining that Slavery at this

period of the world may be voted in or not into any new Territories accordingly as those who first rush to the spot may happen to choose, than to see a man of Pierce's calibre contending for such a diabolical proposition. Sooner than that new States should be added to Slavery in this way, I would see the Union torn to shreds; and yet I have faith that this wicked, Satanic doctrine will, under Providence, with proper exertions of those who love Freedom, result in dealing a more effectual blow at Slavery than any that has been dealt at the monster. Shocking as it seems to give Slavery and Freedom the race-course, and offer the prize to her who will first reach the goal, yet it must seem strange, indeed, if in such a race Freedom should not conquer.

After the christening of his eldest child, he writes:

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *June* 7, 1857.
Sunday afternoon.

It would have always been a source of regret if my father and my child had not been living at the same time. It is a great comfort to think that you and mother were here just when you were. It was just the time to christen the child. The newness of

the relation which her mother and I bore to her gave more excitement to the act of consecration at that time, although we may fancy that we love the child more as she grows older. I think I can understand better now why young Benjamin Franklin and all the babies of that generation were baptized on or very near to the day of the birth. To put off for two or three twelvemonths such a service seems like one's remembering in the middle of the afternoon that he has not thanked God yet for the first light of the morning.

But how strange it seems to think that you can be eighty-one! How contentedly would I "compromise," if spared (as I have not the least expectation I shall be) to the age of sixty, to be permitted at that age to have as much mental and physical vigor as you now have. It is now (within three months) nearly twenty-two years since your regular correspondence with me commenced.

God make this, as much as his Providence will permit, a year to you and mother of comfort and peace! God guard and keep us all, and enable us to say for ourselves and for our friends with Milton: "Nor love thy life, nor hate, but what thou liv'st, live well, how long, how short, permit to Heaven!"

. . . I found Edward Hale and his wife here. . . . E. E. Hale's preaching was much admired, with one dissenting voice — that of a little four-year-old lamb who thought he made more *noise* than Mr. White, and felt that he beat the Bible too familiarly. . . .

In speaking of a journey to North Conway he writes: —

KEARSARGE VILLAGE (NORTH CONWAY),
Friday, July 24, 1857.

We had a beautiful day Tuesday. The air was sweet and perfectly free from dust. . . . We lunched at White River Junction on our March chicken kindly spared by the cat (who ate his sister at an early age) for our present adventure. Said chicken was garnished with ice-cream which we found at the "Junction." . . . Yesterday, Thursday, I walked a mile and a half to the village and through it to hire a baby wagon and get pail, basket, dipper, etc., for the baby. But I had to enter three or four houses and talk with their inmates before I found a "home-made" wagon belonging to a boy of some five or six summers. This I drew back with me, loading it with some of my smaller purchases. This morning I have drawn the baby in it for a half-

hour and it goes very well. No carriage could be bought, they thought, short of Portland.

North Conway, New Hampshire,
July 31, 1857. *Friday*, 3 P.M.

Dear Father and Mother: —

When I wrote last, I was under an engagement to preach in Lancaster fifty-two miles off, on Sunday. I had determined to go in an open wagon, having found that it would on various accounts be more convenient than the stage-coaches. When about eight miles from here, without any apparent reason for the movement, my horse fell full length. The long journey through the Notch rose before me and I felt as if I had not made a very auspicious beginning. I could not, alone, get the horse to his feet, but fortunately I was opposite to an old red house in Bartlett at whose door sat a septuagenarian by the name of Joseph Weeks who came to the rescue. As it began to sprinkle, I put the "team" under the shelter of the shed and passed fifteen minutes with my new acquaintance, who, upon my asking what I could do for him, replied that he would be glad to have me sometime send him a newspaper.

I reached what used to be "Old Crawford's"

at about 7.15 P.M. Dr. Bemis, a Boston dentist, is now proprietor of most of the territory and is living with his farm laborers at the hotel which is closed. I asked for oats for my horse, and he wondered at my expecting to get farther that night. I told him that if I met with any misadventure, it would make another story for the Notch. He said that he would rather have me live to write any such story. On his asking me to stop I said, "But the hotel is closed." He told me that if I would be content with farmer's fare, I might be welcome to stop. So I went in, and after my "tea and toast" the doctor and I had two or three hours' chat about the mountains and some of his pedestrian adventures in exploring them. Next morning at eight I began my second day's journey of thirty-four miles.

. . . When twelve miles from Lancaster in the town of Jefferson I had the finest view of Mount Washington which I have yet seen. My plan was to spend the night at the "Glen House." To avoid seven additional miles by Gorham I concluded to try an old, half-abandoned road through the forest. The road was secluded enough: the silver firs on each side as thick as if they grew in nurseries. I had to ford two streams, the latter the "Peabody

River," which, though not deep, had uncomfortably large stones in it. But when all this was surmounted, there appeared a narrow, dry ravine up which ran a path almost as straight as a fly's on a wall (a bridge here being gone). I tried to lead my horse up, but though he tried bravely to follow, the earth slid from under him. I crept up the bank and descried a house. I summoned help. The man (Charles Davis) told me that they generally took out their horses there; that one man did try to go up, but that the top of his wagon would have fallen off, if some one had not seen what was about to happen in season. He had a horse, however, that would "go up Bunker Hill Monument." So he got his horse, and stationing him at the top of the bank, hitched long iron chains to the buggy and then whipping the horse the refractory vehicle was drawn up. I soon had my horse reharnessed, and being now on the travelled road (though terribly black and muddy) to the "Glen House," reached it after two miles' travel at between seven and eight. Its situation is very picturesque and the house exceedingly good. I found Lucretia, Susan, and Edward Hale there. Twenty miles more next day (Tuesday) brought me to North Conway in season for dinner.

To M. E. W.

KEENE, *September* 2, 1857.

After dinner I walked up Mount Willard, and in about an hour, after going over a black and muddy road, reached the top, taking care, as I approached the summit, to bend my eyes to the ground, until I came to the *very* top, and then — I was completely carried away. It is the crown of my journey, alone worth the whole journey. And it is unlike any view that I can remember, my Swiss impressions being providentially so obliterated by the lapse of fifteen years that they do not rise up in judgment against this view. The view is truly wonderful. It seems like looking into the hold of a mighty ship, and the jagged sides of the Notch seem here as symmetrical as the rounding sides of a bowl. The curve is perfect. Three times I went back to look again after I had turned away. I have nowhere in this country so felt the grandeur of mountains, for Mount Willard being happily lower than Webster and Willey, which rise in front at either hand, you secure the privilege of looking up to what is elevating, as well as down on what is beautiful. I wanted to pull you over from Conway. Whenever you see it, let it be in the afternoon. I saw Mount Crawford at the farther end of the view, and reminded my-

self that it was more of a mountain for your having been on it. . . .

Reaching Keene, as I before said, I am pleased to find that West Mountain seems a good deal nearer the size of Moat Mountain than it did yesterday. I think it is growing. And as for Beech Hill, I can see nothing the other side of it.

The year 1857 is marked by the first of the three great sorrows which were to shadow the next few years. The tie between my father and his sister Mary had been peculiarly strong and her death was a very heavy blow.

To Mrs. F. J. Higginson

Keene, *January* 1, 1858.

My dear Friend: —

Your very kind note reached me here, and we thank you for it. I say "we," for Margaret, before Mary was taken ill, had said to me that she thought she knew no difference between her love for her and that she felt for her own sisters. We find, as the days pass on, the circle widening of those to whom Mary's love was invaluable. Mrs. Perry (formerly Miss Endicott), whom I met at Cousin Nancy's in Salem, told me that she never had such a friend out of her own family. Mrs.

Upham called to see us all in Salem, and was so overcome for a few moments that she could not speak. She said that she felt it was well that they had not been thrown so constantly together of late years as they once had, for "if we had been," she added, "this would have broken my heart."

Harriet Peirson is another friend whose grief is so deep that she has longed to wear mourning for her. Mary's new friends, Ellen Peirson and Martha Lowe, with their husbands, feel that they have met with a severe bereavement. Frank Peabody (son of Rev. W. B. O. P.) wrote me that his wife told him, after first seeing Mary, that there was no friend, "whom she had made since her childhood," to whom her heart warmed so much as to her. Rev. Dr. Smith of Newton, who married a cousin of ours (who was an only child), told us that his wife said that "Mary had seemed to her like a sister."

President Walker writes to father, "She was as perfect an example of what a Christian daughter, wife, and mother should be, as ever I knew."

KEENE, *Thursday, January* 14, 1858.

MY DEAR FATHER: —

I thank you for your letter which I received on Monday. . . . I was particularly interested in what

you said about Mary and was glad that you could also recall her under so many cheering and soothing aspects. But how heavy the thought is at times that we cannot see her here again. How like a new revelation the sense of the loss keeps coming up! And how could we expect it to be otherwise? There would be something unnatural in our state of mind, could we be saved from such depressing thoughts. Our conviction that the Love from which her own love welled forth is deeper and purer and wiser than all earthly love can be, cannot make everything what it was, nor can God intend that it should be the means of blotting out the past. But we must all face the great, inevitable law of separation. It is nothing new. It has always been going on. How hard it is not to feel that such a trial is out of the common course! But is it not better to feel that each pang we feel, we bear for her, each moment of desolation is so much that she is spared from? I think her husband must find strength in the new revelation of the extent of what Mary's sorrow would have been had she been left without him here.

I cordially respond to what you say about our cause for gratitude that we have been blessed with such a life so long. In my own case certainly

(and I dare say you will feel in yours) this bereavement comes as one result of my living in this world so much longer than I once expected. We are generally willing to recover from our sicknesses, and we ought to feel always that we have much to live for, but when our own lives are spared again and again, we must not expect to keep our most cherished blessings by us too, through all life's changes. If we pray for longer life here, we must take its darkness and its light together.

KEENE, *February* 19, 1858.

MY DEAR FATHER: —

Your very welcome birthday letter arrived upon the 12th. . . . I was reminded of an interesting occurrence a year since. As you say, father, "occasions are constantly arising to freshen our sense of Mary's loss." Well, I remember that upon my last birthday, in her letter, she said something like this! "What a sweet birthday greeting for William to feel the velvet touch of those little hands on his cheek as he wakes in the morning!" It did so happen that that very morning, for the first time in her life, the baby had put her hand on my cheeks as I bent over her crib when she waked, and I had been thinking in my mind that it was a "sweet birthday

greeting" when, a few hours after, Mary's letter arrived. Of course this anniversary brought her back with renewed distinctness. She always remembered these periods so well. It was particularly cheering to me to find that there were those still left who could remember a day so marked in my own experience.

Somewhat singularly, the first person in affliction whom I was called to see, on returning from Salem, was a lady who was mourning the loss of a sister who had died at a distance. I saw her again afterward and she said she felt better and happier since I had led her to reflect upon her sister's "being better off where she was," for before, in the midst of her own grief, she had n't stopped to think about that! I thought, on leaving her house, that perhaps it was a lesson that one need not be on the search for out-of-the-way topics of consolation.

Well, the second case that occurred was a funeral where sisters were the chief mourners. But when I began to speak about the early and tender recollections of home as I did on a subsequent call, I found that the family had been plunged into the hardships of life very early — the old home broken up when they were yet children, and each left to plough her own furrow down the sands of time

unto the threescore and tenth landmark which they had all nearly reached. . . .

I preached at home on Sunday, but expect to go to Winchester, twelve miles off, the ensuing Sunday. I exchange with a Universalist preacher. That is the village where Dartmouth College would have been located, had not the chief proprietor of the settlement (Willard, by name) recoiled from the thought of the injury which the thriving township might receive from the influx of a company of dissolute youngsters. There is a beautiful belt of ancient pines, some twenty-one in number, which gird the Ashuelot River, right upon the main street of the town, whose shadows, thrown upon the snow in the moonlight, had a very picturesque effect.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *May* 11, 1858.

Meggie and I were busy yesterday digging about some of our rosebushes, and to-day I have been setting out a tree or two, and uprooting dead ones. I have begun to trim my hedge which is quite an affair, and I see enough to do, including the "working up" of a little wood, to keep me in the open air a good week or more "steady," if I could take as much consecutive time. Two young sparrows are

refitting their nest in our honeysuckle about a yard from our parlor window. I would give a sixpence to know they were the same pair who first built the edifice last year. Were Mother and you to enter the kitchen, you would hear much loud bleating which you would perceive to be instantly quieted by some member of the family going to a basket and covering it with her hands. It was Meggie's care at intervals yesterday in this way to provide for the members of a feathered family much in the same plight with those who called her who lived in a shoe, "Mother." My hen with her nineteen eggs became so impatient of the delay of her latter-day chickens (for there must be a last, as well as a first among nineteen) that we had to take the *alphas* away that she might concentrate her brooding thoughts upon the *omegas*, an operation not perfectly consistent with a constant desire to lead out the early ones into the world. We trust they will all form one family again in a day or two.

We were very pleasantly excited a few days since by learning that the house which stares into our kitchen windows (and was pushed into the corner where it now is, some four years since) has been bought by a neighbor (to whose house it is as near as our sparrow's nest to our parlor window) and

will be moved off this fall. It thrills my heart with more pleasurable emotions than the marriage of the Princess Royal, or even the marriages of every one of the Queen's family would. How beneficently Providence distributes and proportions our sources of pleasure!

CHESTER, VERMONT, *June* 21, 1858.

DEAR FATHER: —

We have heard of "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties," and were you to see me in this long dining-room with my lamp between the castor and piles of plates upon the side table (being driven to these quarters by new paint in the parlor), you might think I was practising chirography under somewhat of difficulty. But I want to tell you and mother a little about the first day of our little journey.

After dinner we proceeded (to drive) towards Chester, reaching C. at about seven on the longest day of the year, with L. as happy as a little singing bird at the close of her thirty-eight miles' drive. She has been only a little comfort all day, sometimes coaxing us to let her throw a stone into the "pretty water" that it may go "splash," or asking for flowers, but not crying from morning to night.

She enjoyed amazingly getting out and romping through the covered bridge between Walpole and Westminster with her mother. . . . But about 6 P.M., as we had made our journey four miles longer by taking a wrong road (which gave us such picturesque views as only wrong roads do), she wanted "minnie milk." I stopped at rather an unpromising little cottage (in front of which strode a flock of twenty-five turkeys with hens and chickens not far off), and passing through the open door where a little girl of five or six was sitting, I told, to quite an old gray-beard, the story of a little hungry girl about two years old who had tasted no milk the livelong day, producing L.'s silver cup which was instantly filled, and which she drank with perfect delight. . . .

The scenery we have enjoyed very much. The grape blossoms scented the air this morning, and the day was all that a fine day can be. It is the first time we have ever taken just such a trip together, and the first time we have taken any journey just at this season, and it seems to be doing us all good. We set off, we hope, at about seven to-morrow for our thirty miles' drive to Manchester, Vermont, the *Ultima Thule* of our expedition as we expect.

KEENE, *July* 6, 1858.

One evening of last week we had four young men (being part of Margaret's Sunday-School Class) at tea with us. I heard that one of them said afterwards that "if anybody did n't have a good time at Mr. White's, he'd better go off into the woods by himself."

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *Wednesday, September* 15, 1858.

I preached last Sunday afternoon about the English translations of the Scriptures, that is, Wyckliffe's, Tyndale's, Coverdale's, and the King James one, including in the sermon historical incidents connected with the painful and protracted birth of the Bible into English. The English Hexapla which I got in London for you and which you transferred to me was my authority. It took me some time to compile the sermon, but I was paid by the information which I thus fastened in my own mind. It has set me to reading more about Wyckliffe in the Vaughan's "Life of Wyckliffe" which you once gave me and in a German Life of him which I have.

Yesterday morning there came a big box to my door (with notes which I may by and by enclose

for you to see) containing fifteen volumes of the edition now in publication of the Encyclopedia Britannica (with promise of the remaining volumes, when issued), from my parish. It is just what I wanted, and the circumstances under which this gift of a hundred dollars or more was made are very pleasant. We were entirely taken by surprise in its reception.

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *September* 27, 1858.

O the comet! Is n't he an agreeable arrival? I fear you must go outdoors to see him, but perhaps you may see from your study window the "blazing star" as a neighbor of mine called it. On my telling him said comet's tail was six million miles long, he replied, "Well, that ar is a kind o' curus." Comet from coma, hair, from its bearded appearance. See Encyclopedia, Britannica (the parish, his gift).

To D. A. W. AND R. H. W.

KEENE, *February* 15, 1859.

On Saturday evening, some wedding guests with a bride and bridegroom appeared unexpectedly in my parlor. Upon my remarking that I had found February 12 a good day to be born on, and I did n't

see why it might not be a good day to be married on, the bride remarked that it was her birthday, and that it was for that reason it had been selected as the wedding day. If they had undertaken to hunt up a minister in the State at large whose birthday was thus coincident, it might have taken them some time. . . .

To D. A. W.

KEENE, *April* 13, 1860.

They [the parish] showed their good-will by adding fifty dollars to my salary which evens off the fractions and gives me four hundred dollars twice a year besides my wood which is worth about ninety more. It is amusing to see how many things M. and I have been doing with that fifty to-day. We have spent it in imagination almost fifty times over. One gentleman remarking that it was but a small addition, I told him that it was a good deal pleasanter than to hear that fifty had been taken off.

In the summer of 1860 my father took a horseback journey with his young friend and opposite neighbor, Charles A. Boies. The route they took was one that is a favorite with motorists to-day,

for their journey included part of the Connecticut Valley, the Green Mountains, the Berkshires, and the Catskills. No tourists of the present day as they flash through town after town can get greater enjoyment out of their journey than did the two horseback riders, whose unsatisfactory stable horses shied at the stage-coaches as they passed, and refused to accommodate themselves to the saddles, which had evidently been borrowed for the occasion. It was a leisurely progress, as in almost every town, one or the other of the equestrians had friends whom they both stopped to see, and as an invitation to a dinner or supper usually followed, their trip was a delightfully social affair. In Walpole, for instance, they had their supper at the Frederick Knapps', then made a call on Dr. Bellows, and afterwards went to see another friend who, to quote from a letter of my father's, "got an antediluvian pair of saddle-bags from his barn which proved so much more capacious than mine that I carried them in front (or rather over the others) to Bellows Falls and there sent back Orren French's to Keene, and rejoiced in finding that I could pack both my rubber coat and my waistcoat in the K. bags."

The beginning of the year 1859 was marked by a

great joy, only too soon to be followed by a lasting sorrow. Mr. White's only son was born January 24, and named for his grandfather, Daniel Appleton White. A few weeks of intense happiness were followed on March 5 by the baby's death of scarlet fever taken from the older child.

It was only two years later that my father had to face a grief of another kind, for his father died on March 30, 1861, after a brief illness, in perfect possession of his faculties, at the age of eighty-four years, nine months, and twenty-three days.

My father thus writes to my mother from Salem on April 6, 1861: —

"Only one week ago this morning I was carrying a note to Dr. Wheatland, of the Institute, with Father's autograph and returning to find that he had asked for me and was waiting to dictate two business letters. So time recedes. The precious memories of that morning, the hymns and prayers and loving words will never be again even so near in memory as the distance of a week. And yet how much nearer the heart they will always be than multitudes of impressions of the very day and hour through which we may be passing. Each day is bringing the signal for our own departure nearer. How short the interval must seem, to those who

are already "on the other side," that will elapse before we join them! How short the separation between Father and Mary! Let us only be ready to say, 'May I die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his!'"

In writing to his elder daughter, March 29, 1874, he says: —

"To-morrow (30th) makes just thirteen years since your Grandfather White's death. I shall be happy indeed if I can know (as I hope he now does) that I live on half as vividly in my children's minds after I have left the world as he does in mine. The reality of his constant influence over me is far greater than that of many living friends."

CHAPTER VIII

THE CIVIL WAR

1861–1865

In 1861 Mr. and Mrs. White's peaceful life in Keene was shadowed by the Civil War, which cloud for the next four years hung like a black pall over the country. Their hearts were wrung by the sorrows of their parishioners, and it was peculiarly hard for them personally, as four of Mr. White's nephews fought for their country, two of whom gave their lives for her, while two of Mrs. White's brothers were in the Northern army and two in the Southern. Those years were full of the absorbing interest of work connected with the war for both of them. Mrs. White was very active in sewing for the soldiers, and there were days when the parsonage was full of parishioners, scraping lint or making bandages, and the smallest children in the parish caught the patriotic fire and made comfort bags for the soldiers, sometimes putting in a note, and having the great joy of getting an answer. The views of their elders were intensified by these

young things until a "rebel" was a synonym of all that was most wicked and depraved.

Mr. White's voice had never given an uncertain sound, nor was he one who, had he been living in 1914, could have remained "strictly neutral." He had always been bitterly opposed to slavery, and he espoused the cause of the North with his whole heart. The fact that there were a few Southern sympathizers in his congregation, one or two of them of social prominence, made no difference in his course. He felt it his duty to preach as conscience bade him. On one occasion a parishioner of distinction, for whom he had a high regard, got up in the middle of a sermon and walked out of church, never to return. Mr. White regretted the occurrence, but it made no difference in his preaching. If he occasionally made an enemy by his emphatic ways, he more often retained the respect and personal liking of those who differed from him.

The letters and extracts which follow show the way in which the pattern of those years was woven, and the occasional bright strands which stood out against the sombre background.

To M. E. W.

SALEM, *April* 24, 1861.

I saw Mr. Quincy and Mr. Savage yesterday and found them earnest and patriotic at the respective ages of eighty-nine and seventy-five, and I found a whole city full of flying flags, Washington Street looking beautifully with tier upon tier of colors as you looked down the street. Here in Salem the City Hall mounts a handsome flag and the towers at the railroad, each, one. At the little station of Lincoln on the Fitchburg Road the cabman's horse wore his little flag.

M. E. W. TO R. H. W.

Sunday, May 5, 1861.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—

I am going to write to you about our interesting service this morning, for I am afraid William will not tell you about it.

Just before church, Mr. Fiske (who is one of the officers, under Government, in this State, and who leaves his home to-morrow, with the troops from here, for Portsmouth, and who is liable to be called to the seat of war, at any moment) came to ask William to christen his baby, before church. When we got into the church, we found, to our surprise,

that the recruits were assembled there, in the side pews — those of them, at least, who are in town to-day.

Presently Mr. Fiske and his beautiful wife walked in with their lovely baby, and the touching service was performed, directly in front of this body of rough-looking men. There was something very affecting in the sight of that helpless little one, knowing, as we did the peculiar uncertainties of the future which lay before it, and in the contrast of the sweet picture of home and happiness and love which it called up, and the visions of hardship and bloodshed which the sight of the browned faces of the men brought to mind.

The hymn before the sermon fell on softened hearts and many tears fell when we sang, —

> "Oh! let us seek our heavenly home
> Revealed in sacred lore;
> The land whence pilgrims never roam,
> Where soldiers war no more.
>
> Where they who meet shall never part," etc.

Then came William's sermon, from 2 Timothy, II, 4[1] and which could not have been more appropriate to the occasion if he had known who his

[1] "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

audience were to be. After he concluded his sermon, by an irresistible impulse he turned and addressed himself directly to these men in a few forcible, touching words, which brought the tears from the eyes of the men, and I think there were few dry ones among the audience.

Then followed our communion service, at which we had another baptism, and a young lady was admitted to the communion.

We came home feeling that few days could offer so many exciting interests. But what a season of excitements we are living in! Our life is like a highly wrought novel, all the time, nowadays, and how full the papers are of noble and stirring incidents! It is a grand thing to be living in the midst of such realities. . . .

I have been working very hard as William will tell you for our men. . . .

My father was also deeply stirred by the excitement of the times. He writes to my mother from East Cambridge, on June 30, as follows: —

". . . Then I went and awaited in Haymarket Square the departure of Colonel Clark's (11th) regiment for the war, on its way from the Fitchburg to the Old Colony Depot. This column of

one thousand men with their bayonets glancing in the sun, and the crowds welcoming them as they passed, afforded a grand sight, the like of which I have not seen before."

M. E. W. TO R. H. W.

KEENE, *February* 13, 1862.

. . . Dear William opened his eyes, on his birthday morning, saddened by the thought of the precious greeting which, until now, never failed to reach him upon that day, but deeply grateful for the mercy which had spared his own little home circle. There was to be a gathering of the parish in the evening, according to a notice given on Sunday, and as I have not been well enough to go to any of these gatherings this winter, and as William seemed anxious to have me go with him, in honor of the day, I rested and at seven o'clock started off with him, thinking and meaning to get there among the first; as I felt the usual shrinking from encountering a great many people at once, which one, long excluded from large gatherings, always feels. We were very much surprised to find upon arriving every appearance, in the dressing-room, of there being a great crowd already assembled. We found some ladies waiting for us, to hurry us up, and Dr.

Ingersoll, who gave me his arm and ushered me into the hall, following William, whom Mr. Richards took on his arm. Once across the threshold and we were dazzled by a flood of light, and found ourselves in a room beautifully trimmed, and letters on one side, of evergreen, "Teacher, Pastor, Friend"; on the other, "Welcome, Feb. 12." Underneath this stood a long table brilliant with candles and silver, and loaded with roast turkeys, oysters, salads, ices, etc., — everything pertaining to a splendid supper; and the whole crowned with two vases of exquisite greenhouse flowers. We were carried behind the table and seated, in front of some two hundred pairs of eyes, and Mr. Richards, after a few words of welcome, introduced Dr. Ingersoll, who made a tasteful and appropriate speech. Then Dr. Thayer presented the flowers to William, reading some very beautiful and touching verses. Then a blessing was asked by Dr. Ingersoll and the supper was administered. Nothing could have been prettier or more gratifying, or a more complete surprise, than the whole thing. Our beautiful flowers make our parlor to-day look as if we were adorned for some great occasion, and a huge frosted cake will for a long time keep us in remembrance of the pleasant "surprise party." . . .

In spite of the fact that Mr. White was such an ardent Republican, and notwithstanding the occasional violence of his language in regard to those on the other side, his never-failing interest in the individual when brought into direct contact with him is shown by the following extract from a letter written on June 29, 1862, concerning a workman whom he employed when he was making some alterations on his house: —

" . . . The man, the other workmen say, is such a Secessionist (an Englishman from Hartford) that he ought to be turned out of the house. I reply that he does not talk Secesh to me, and that if he does to them, it must be their fault if they don't convert him, Providence having sent him here, perhaps, to that end."

In addition to altering his own house, my father bought the next house to his as an investment. The house had to be repaired and the fences moved. He writes: —

" . . . I felt quite 'set up' by the remark of an elderly gentleman, who has moved in here from Charlestown, New Hampshire, within the year, that he did not believe, 'so I've been telling them,' he said, 'that there was another man in town who could have got all those fences up in such little

time. It beats all. I'd no idea you'd so much perseverance outdoors.'"

The letter goes on: —

"I attended two rather unusual funerals this week. One was that of a New Brunswick Indian woman, Mrs. Paul, on which occasion I overheard more derogatory remarks than I ever before listened to as regards myself, so near the threshold of 'the house of mourning.' The Irish Catholic women (for Paulina was Catholic) said: 'And why have n't they a *haerse* instade o' this oogly ould cart? Better have been without the minister than without the *haerse;* it's rale mane not to give us the *haerse.*'

"The other was the funeral of one who had literally worked while it was day and even into the twilight. It was an Englishman who was buried, Thomas Musgrave by name, some said brother to a Lord Bishop. He wrought faithfully and patiently as a dyer in our woollen factory here until within some seven or eight days of his death. He would have been eighty-nine had he lived three days longer. He came to this country when about seventy-five. He had been crippled years ago in the wars of Napoleon, as regarded his early manufacturing enterprises. His son, sixty-three years old, from Mystic, Connecticut, was here as chief mourner."

September 4, 1862.

I found Margaret's new chamber full of young ladies making bandages and scraping lint for Dr. Twitchell to take with him to Washington. One evening last week I heard Dr. T. and Dr. Thayer announce at the Town Hall that they were going (for three years) and then Mr. Carter, one of my young married parishioners, a fine fellow, and then James Elliot from College and Arthur Elliot his brother came forward and signed their names "offering their services for the country."

It was a moving sight. Since then Mr. Houston and Mr. Lewis (like Carter), members of our choir, have enlisted.

Sunday before last I preached a commemoration sermon (and our services were all of a similar character in the afternoon) occasioned by the loss of Major Dort's wife and child in the collision on the Potomac. She was a lovely woman. They had just returned from seeing the Major. That Sunday he was here, having returned to see about his one little surviving child; the remains had not then been discovered.

William Chapin (sutler) is prisoner in Richmond. Howard is soldier in McClellan's bodyguard. Charles (the youngest), I saw drilling with others

in Brattleboro and expecting I believe to go to the war.

Dwight Orne, you know, is in Colonel Barnes's regiment. So all the male descendants of my Grandfather Orne are substantially there but myself.

My father thus writes to his mother after the death of his nephew, Wilder Dwight: —

KEENE, *October* 2, 1862.

Just a week ago to-day, we met upon the occasion of those solemn and affecting services. Such a day is always more or less sad, but as I look back on that Thursday, its track of light seems brighter than I can remember associating with any similar occasion. Here was not merely the termination of life which may come to save the young sometimes from the evil to come, or the aged from the burden of infirmities, or the lonely from desolation, or the sick from torturing pain. But some purpose was accomplished by the very dying itself; it is expected that such as go into the service shall take their life in their hand. Had none been willing to die for their country we should have no country worth the name. The very dying, then, becomes connected with our earthly salvation. Wilder rises

before me now, as our true benefactor. He has died for us, his kindred. Whatever we live to enjoy, when the strife is over, we may feel that he has, in part, laid down his life for us. You have characterized exceedingly well, "the heart, the mind, the eloquent voice that fitted him to serve his country." He has indeed shown how "he could be a tender nurse, as well as a devoted friend and a brave soldier."

It was very gratifying as well as instructive to find that the parents who so idolized him, could bear their loss in a spirit at once so brave and so Christian. They have certainly evinced that Wilder was indeed their own child, "bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh." They have caught the inspiration of his sublime death. No written words I ever saw, so lifted up my heart, as that blood-sealed record which showed that he who was writing, had already entered "into that which is within the veil."

The sermon that Mr. White preached on a Thanksgiving Day during this time reflects conditions so similar to those of to-day, that it might almost be preached word for word as it stands, in reference to the European War.

Here is a part of it, —

"Come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the Lord. 2 Chron. xxix, 31.

"Surely, to-day, for the nation's dead, we have a thank offering to render. The very soil is made sacred as their resting place. What have we to be so thankful for? They have gone onward; we, in our turn, must all follow. When wasting disease assails us, then the memory of their heroic sacrifice will rebuke us, if we be tempted to murmur; when 'the last enemy,' that spectre of death, as he has so often been regarded, stands before our very eyes, and we feel trembling and afraid, then the bright thought of those armies who stood up unflinchingly beneath the frowning shadow of his iron scythe, will fill our hearts with unutterable shame if we cannot say with their calmness, 'Lord, I bow to thee, the great Commander, I follow thy word, lead thou me on, thou Lord of Hosts, through the thickening shadows in the way thou shalt appoint.'

"When we grow too much absorbed in buying and selling and getting gain, then the memory of their valor, their unselfish offering of their very lives for truth, honor, justice and liberty, will fill us with scorn and loathing of ourselves, if we do not wisely

and generously devote the lives made worth the living only through their sacrifice, to ends akin to those great objects for which they poured out their blood. That field of Gettysburg, over whose buried patriots the chief magistrate of the nation implored that we might be dedicated anew to the country for which they died; that field over which he walked, arm in arm with that old man of threescore years and ten who rushed forth from his work shop on the eve of the 4th of July to join our brave forces, comes before our minds and testifies that we ought to offer some thank offering for our priceless dead. Who now grudges stitches taken that those wayworn and weary feet might be clothed, that those heads now safely shielded from earthly suns, might be cooled? Who now laments that he did so much for those whose lives were given for him? Bring in then a thank offering into the house of the Lord. For what would those ascended spirits, who found their fiery car ready to bear them up from many a hard-fought field, reply, were we to ask them what thank offering we shall render to their memory? Would not they all say, 'Give of your abundance to them unto whom we have bequeathed the cause we died for. Remember the hospitals we languished in, the regiments out of

which the angel of death hath gathered us, while we look on from above in anxious expectation, praying that the work sealed by our blood may not be dishonored by our countrymen.'"

And here is an extract from a Christmas sermon he preached during the Civil War: —

"This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. Luke II, 34.

"Once more Bethlehem with its moonlit slopes and thronging pilgrims; again the echoes of that music which swept the midnight air long centuries ago! New to us, indeed, the heart-piercing contrast between the promise of peace on earth, goodwill toward men, and the sullen tramp of hundreds of thousands of armed men within our own borders. New to us, but not new to the world; the same sad drama has been rehearsed in other lands on many a Christmas Eve, nor has the seemingly bitter mockery of the angels' song availed to hide from men's hearts the memory of the time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa.

"May we not say that it almost needs our being brought face to face with the miseries of war to make us approach a true understanding of the blessings which the world must experience, when

He 'shall' everywhere 'reign whose right it is to reign.' *Now*, at least, we know how to hail the birth of the Prince of *Peace*. *Now* we perceive what the return of this anniversary must have meant to Christians who could only celebrate it in gloomy caves where they must have been more reminded of him who lay three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, than of the child lying in the manger. *Now* we understand how its festive and exuberant mirth must have mildly flashed upon the storm cloud in those dreary years of contest between Puritan and Cavalier, like the electric lights which at night sometimes gild the crests of the heaving ocean. 'On earth, peace!' Say, has the holy season yet dawned upon a world at peace? Has it ever seen a nation where there were no hearthstones at which the absent warrior was remembered, or where the cherished traditions of ancestral valor were not recounted? God sanctify to us the coming of a festival which restores to our minds the vision of the innumerable privileges and joys of a true peace! We may be too much in danger of becoming dazzled by the glory of success, or at least of being too passionately athirst for it. We are learning to hear coldly of the slaughter of hundreds of men, if they

did not happen to fall upon our side; when the destruction of half as many upon a railroad would awaken our profound compassion for the survivors. Thus it is that War, the stern, hard featured nurse, in whose arms alone the savage nations are fondled, is fast imparting to us somewhat of the spirit which she imparts to them. O, let not these hallowed hours fail to disabuse us somewhat of the baleful spell which she weaves around us! Let us be saved from the peril of adoring war *as war*. Let us determine, in our own minds, that although we can trace beneficent compensations in the midst of the wretchedness which war creates, it is the cause alone which at this age of the world can afford any palliation for a resort to its bloody arbitrament on the part of enlightened nations. Once in the year, at least, we cannot help being reminded that to live among 'wars and rumors of wars' is to breathe a pestiferous atmosphere, to live unnaturally. Rapidly we seem to be travelling backwards over the pages of history; we have lost our mark; we have opened at the wrong volume, when from these sweet emblems of prophecy, these peace-breathing buds of promise, we look out in imagination from these windows and are startled by beholding the manifold paraphernalia of battle.

"But peace — the peace of which the angels sang, the peace on whose makers Christ commanded a blessing, is not inaction or torpor. Else Christ might as well have said, 'Blessed are they that sleep.' How strangely indeed would it read among those benedictions, 'Happy are they who sleep over the miseries of their country.' 'Blessed are all they who will let the wicked have their own way.'

"'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' Is not that in your Bible as well as precepts inculcating forgiveness?

"An idle Christian, even in peaceable times, is a self-contradiction; but an idle Christian or an idle patriot in the hour when the institutions which have been his country's glory are treacherously assailed shall never win the fair fame of a *peace-maker*. And we may remember that though we be commanded to love our enemies; — 'Let thine enemy alone; give him the field,' is nowhere enjoined.

"We must confess then that if peace is not the reward of idleness, or the boon of subserviency, there is often something for men and for nations to do in order to obtain a peace worthy the name. True, hearty, enlightened, enduring peace comes through struggle."

In a letter of July 13, 1863, he says concerning a trip from Yonkers to New York: —

To M. E. W.

Seeing a pleasant-looking young officer coming in among the crowd, I offered him a seat. He proved to be Assistant Surgeon T. T. Minor, of the First South Carolina Volunteers. Speaking warmly of his Colonel (Thomas Wentworth Higginson), I mentioned my early acquaintance with him. So we soon got acquainted, very well acquainted, indeed, by the time he reached Worcester. I was very much pleased with him, and with what he had to say about the blacks. He spoke of their funny language as exhibited at times; for instance, when he would say to a sick man, "Tom, how are you this morning?"

"O! Massa, pretty mis'able, t'ank God." . . .

I am very sorry to read about the New York riot. I dare say in a week the city will be under martial law. But on Saturday nothing could be quieter than the drafting exhibition at No. 677 Third Avenue where I spent some ten or fifteen minutes, being interested in watching the turning of the wheel, and the calling of the names.

To M. E. W.

BOSTON, 7.30 A.M. *Wednesday, July* 15, 1863.

. . . You will read of bloody scenes here last night. I saw nothing of them. All is pretty quiet in Dock Square this morning. They quelled the riot here in the *only effectual* way. Alas, for Governor Seymour, sending to Washington for a suspension of the New York draft, and temporizing with the riot. Martial law, which should shut up every liquor den in that city till the draft is through with, is the needed thing, it seems to me; but if New York likes better a reign of *wild beasts* than one of soldiers, so be it.

M. E. W. TO R. H. W.

KEENE, *September* 24, 1863.

I have been peculiarly engaged in helping arrange a table of refreshments, on the Fair Grounds, for the Soldiers' Aid Society. . . . Our enterprise for the soldiers, was quite successful; we have cleared one hundred dollars, which is a good deal of money to make out of pies and doughnuts. I was on the grounds yesterday eight hours, working hard all the time, without time to eat anything but a biscuit, and did not get over-tired. This will

show you how well I am. I am grateful, I can assure you, for so much health and strength. William, too, is working as only a well man can.

There is a homely record of this year which will appeal to housekeepers. My father, during my mother's absence, was confronted by a junk pedler, and got rid of a number of articles, among others an old copper teakettle, copper bringing seventeen cents a pound, old lead, for which he got seven and a half cents a pound, and cotton, which brought from eighteen to twenty cents a pound according to its quality.

W. O. W. TO R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
February 16, 1864.

. . . I was busy yesterday in making ready for the reception of the parish at our house in the evening, or you would have heard from me a day earlier. We had one hundred and twenty-seven guests, or (together with our own family) one hundred and thirty-three people, all but three of whom were connected with the parish; a pretty good representation. And when I remembered that the well-thronged rooms included just the number of the

last Sunday afternoon's audience, it occurred to me that afternoon audiences would look less lean, compared with the morning ones, were they compacted into the rooms of a dwelling-house. We have some forty-two new names connected with the parish as heads of families or as single people since January 1, 1863: of these a goodly number were present last evening. So were five of the eight brides of the parish. . . . One "son of thunder," in especial, whose arrival I had somewhat dreaded, remained at home for the Christian discipline of a Grandmother (who has seen better days, or evenings); while his disencumbered parents took their places cheerfully among our guests. . . . The moon guided home our good Mr. Nourse and wife and adopted child to their home on Beech Hill, and Mr. C. K. Colony and wife, and our Mr. and Mrs. Billings, to their homes on the outskirts of the village. . . .

Old Mrs. Fitch made her visit before the evening hour yesterday, spending about fifteen minutes between four and five, as she lives a mile off, nearly. She brought two little paper and cloth birds which vibrate now among our flowers. She did not like her Mrs. T. and had summarily dismissed her. Mrs. T. would sit up late and get up late. Then

she was a "spiritist" and would tell Mrs. Fitch that she heard in the stove the spirit of an old woman that she once took care of, that died of dropsy; such divertisements did not chime in with Mrs. F.'s mood, so she is now alone again.

We are rejoicing in our winter Sunday-School which our lengthened intermission affords us. Margaret has a full class of married women. . . . We count some one hundred and three (teachers and all) some Sundays, and have generally some ninety-eight or one hundred: far better than lying dormant as we once did with our hour's intermission, and which was the custom when I came. Still, I sometimes miss my little gathering of children which for three years past (in default of Sunday-School) I had after the afternoon meeting (at church).

To D. A. W. AND R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
April 17, 1864.

This is the eighth Sunday that I have been at home (including Fast, as good as nine), but on one of them I had a supply, and on another I occupied(!) the Orthodox pulpit, as you have heard, in connection with Mr. Hamilton, during the fore-

noon, on occasion of the funerals of two men injured by the steam explosion. . . .

Well, we have made indeed an "overturn" in our domestic affairs, and never in our history as a little household has a transition been so comfortably made from what was so satisfactory to something equally so, possibly more so in the end. The new girls require guidance from the mistress; but they are sweet-tempered, refined, intelligent; can appreciate Margaret's thoughtful care for them, and seem part of the family, to an extent, without showing any pushing or forthputting proclivities. They incline to go to church with us, at least, after one or two Sundays' experience, though more "strictly" brought up. With arms round one another's shoulders (they are cousins) they are standing by the piano, singing (in the parlor, under me) psalm tunes with Margaret and the children. . . .

God give you much to rejoice in, this coming year, including brighter days for the country, which I trust you will live to see with her sword sheathed, and her clanking chain which began to grate before you were born, broken to powder! . . .

The two cousins referred to in the above letter were refined young women from small country

towns, who had never been in service. They did the work of the house, having their meals together in the kitchen and spending their evenings there, but in the late afternoon joining the household under the trees, while my mother read aloud from "The Lady of the Lake."

All the social complications which arose from such an unusual experiment were met with perfect simplicity on both sides. Susan the cook had a brother who was a Congregational minister, and on one occasion he came to see her. He was invited by my mother to stay to dinner, and dined with us, while his sister cooked the dinner and his cousin waited on table.

In writing to the Reverend Edward Everett Hale, on February 21, 1865, concerning a possible pulpit for a fellow minister, Mr. White says: "He will be very glad of a 'look' at an empty pulpit, or, from such a desk at an 'inviting' congregation. . . . I hope he will not feel compelled to abdicate the pulpit, — as such, — and take up teaching altogether. For I do not think that the new kind of homilizers that we raise will, all of them, come up to him in serviceable qualities, even though among them (the preachers) there be any who think that the last,

best utterance from heaven is their own sweet voice.

"'What good would the swallowing a button do the little boy,' you know.

"'Don't see as 't would do him any good,' said 'sis,' ''cept he should swallow a buttonhole too.'

"So I show you (in B.) a button, and if somebody has already troubled you with the buttonhole (an empty pulpit), why, maybe, you can see how the two would fit. Of course I should n't trouble you with any match-making of this kind, save that, like your Uncle Edward of blessed memory, you live for this sort of thing, that is, the relieving the dilemmas of all sorts of people."

A year later he writes to Dr. Hale as follows: —

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
February 12, 1866.

DEAR E. E. H.: —

The last "Register" was remarkably good; freer also from typographical errors than usual. The paper, of late years, has had an evil distinction in this regard. So did our Keene paper for a series of years, when they printed in an obituary "all my prings are in thee," and gravely discussed the matter thinking it some Bible phrase that scholars would understand. It is now uncommonly free from

them, simply because the present proof-reader, a young mechanic, is accurate and has a quick eye. Think of such errors in the "Advertiser" ! ! !

Week before last, it seemed as if the Evil One had been at work, mixing up the types, and no wonder if he does such work that his name is germane to newspaperial establishments. For instance, look at February 3d's "Register," page 3d, over "Marriages," where Professor Blot is talked about who surely would think that he had it on his 'scutcheon. Just think, in my notice of Bushnell's book, the "Register" made me speak of his *kindly* words, instead of his *kindling* words.

My wife, with considerable *esprit de corps*, rejoices in some error in this week's "Inquirer"; nothing so racy as the above, however.

But supreme among all the errors was one which my father used to quote with glee in after years, though at the time it gave him considerable annoyance. He had written to the "Christian Register" of the beauty and dignity of Dr. William H. Furness's supplications during some service, and certainly the printer's devil must have been around on that occasion, for the reader learned of Dr. Furness's "supple actions."

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
March 10, 1865.

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

. . . I felt as if you must have exceedingly rejoiced in the inaugural of Mr. Lincoln. It seemed as if the period of our atonement were coming round to have such anti-slavery feeling welling out, at last, pure and strong from the lips of the chief of the nation.

You must value the privilege of still having the good use of your eyes, were it only to read, as you sit alone, some of the utterances, as well as much of the history, to which this war has given rise. . . .

To M. E. W.

BOSTON, 85 PINCKNEY ST.,
Saturday, March 18, 1865.

. . . My day yesterday was about lost. The 9.15 train from Keene reached us while we stood lingering, shivering on the brink, —

"And feared to launch away"

from the angry, furious, overgrown current of Scott's Brook, just below Fitzwilliam. Scott's Brook was sweeping quite across the track. We made two or three periodical excursions in the

cars to the brook and back to Fitzwilliam, only to find the current rising. At last they propped up the rails with wood and a handcar boldly went across, and afterwards by repeated excursions, it took all the passengers and then the baggage. Walking a mile, I came to another ugly place, a caving-in, in front of which the train from Boston had passed. This was short, however, compared with the former and was planked over. The first intimation that we were likely to get on to Boston which I received, was the meeting F. E. Allen walking from the east on his way to the Keene cars. Perhaps he called to see you. It was three o'clock before we were headed once more for Boston, and my express train reached said city at 6 P.M.

During our detention I set off on a foraging expedition, and knocked at the back door of a wee red house. "How do you do, Mr. White," was the response. It proved to be the wife of a man whom I had twice married, a Mrs. Hovey. She handed me mince pie and doughnuts which I was glad to grapple with, having had only apples and hard crackers in the morning. But the car bell rang, and with my slice of pie in my hand, I ran. . . .

To M. E. W.

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS,
Tuesday, March 21, 1865. 9.30 A.M.

I went from Chelsea to East Boston and spent a long hour or more with my "Great" Uncle Haynes. I was very much pleased with him. As he opened the door, he had somewhat of the (commanding) air of father, only a little more so, but he instantly became smiling and genial, and the apparent "Whom have we here now?" changed into an apparent "Well, this is just the right thing at the right time," as I named my name. He is living in the first house built in East Boston, a worn-out-looking wooden house, but with quite a liberal garden in which with his garden clothes he, in his eightieth year, had just been working. You would have enjoyed seeing him point out his blooming snowdrops and pansies there. He has lived there ever since 1833, having built this house. His wife died ten years since, and his only son died when seventeen years old. He has a brother living near Haverhill, Massachusetts. His wife's sister, a Mrs. Kilbourn, who has just lost two sons in the war, lives with him.

He speaks very fluently and correctly, and his mind seems alert. He is quite a good-looking man.

He showed me the cane which Thomas Haynes, his grandfather, received in 1698 from the Indians for his good behavior among them when in captivity. *His* father, Jonathan, was killed by the Indians that year 1698. The cane is curiously carved.

Altogether, the visit was very pleasant, and I felt as if I should like to have you see him some time. His oldest brother (half brother) was fifty-one years older than he.

After the death of President Lincoln, Mr. White wrote to his mother as follows: —

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
April 17, 1865. *Monday.*

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

. . . Since I wrote you how much we have lived through! These glorious victories, succeeded by the deep national sorrow, have kept our hearts in alternate tumult of exultation and agony. Saturday was one of the darkest days in my life, and I doubt not you can say in yours.

"They've lost the best friend they had," says one man, referring to the rebels.

"Lord love you," says a parishioner of mine who has lost excellent children, "I've seen trouble, but nothing ever came to me so cutting as this."

And this he says forty-eight hours after hearing the news, and with weeping eyes.

Our bells tolled. Then as I went (twenty miles) to Warwick, the Winchester bells twelve miles off were tolling.

"We're all mourners," I said to a man at work in his yard.

"Yes, yes," he replied in a most pathetic tone.

At Warwick I broke off from my sermon, and spoke of the event, and had the comfort to hear a lady tell me, "You have filled our hearts."

During the first hymn, —

> "God is the refuge of his saints,
> When storms of sharp distress invade," —

a "veteran" (soldier) broke into sobs and was in tears, I was told, all through the service.

More tears were shed that day, I believe, than were ever shed on this planet, in any one day before. But how like a rocket at the zenith of his fame he has gone up!

As I was writing to Emily, he is my favorite of all our American statesmen, not excepting Washington, for I think his humor and his plain talk are elements in him which our more statuesque Wash-

ington was not the better for not possessing. His style was inimitable. . . .

Our door is arched with black. The churches were dressed in black yesterday. It was quite affecting to me yesterday, on my return, when I saw a wee bit of a house on the outskirts of Winchester in mourning, and then discerned another in similar grief, an eighth of a mile off.

We shall have a funeral service at twelve Wednesday in our church, the time of the Washington funeral.

Little Eliza said in sobs to her mother on Saturday, "O, mamma, mamma! What will the poor slaves do? Who will take care of the poor slaves now?"

My feeling was, "Who will pity the authors of rebellion now?"

May 4, 1865.

My dear Mother:—

Your welcome letter came duly, but found me busy once more with preparation for extra services on occasion of our good President's funeral.

What an April it has been! How crowded with events! . . .

Our five Protestant churches were all filled on the funeral occasion. I spoke some fifteen or twenty

minutes before offering prayer, preferring, for the occasion, so doing to having any "cut-and-dried" remarks.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *June* 3, 1865.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—

The day was very fine at Concord, and as an invited guest I could ride, and thus better enjoy the long procession, bands of music, the tastefully draped houses, etc. The torn and blackened battle-flags most interested me, revealing the dangers to which the country had been exposed more than aught else that I had seen. I met several returned soldiers, one cripple from Atkinson, New Hampshire, to whom a comrade, as he met him, said, "Why, we *buried* you!" And upon parting from him added, "Well, I'm glad to see the dead, brought to life." . . .

To R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *June* 29, 1865.

I had last Sunday the refreshment of an exchange at Fitzwilliam. My drive was in great contrast to that when I last exchanged there, on January 15. Then the trees were glittering with ice and numbers of the slender birches crowded

with icicles had been cut down, so entirely by their icy prostration had they encumbered the road. Now the air was genial, the streams sparkling and the green leaves glancing in the sun. Yet the beauty of the January ride with its forest of diamonds has left a more permanent impression.

At Troy I took tea with a sort of Nature's nobleman, one Thomas Goodall, an Englishman by birth with but forty-eight cents in his pocket at twenty-one and ragged too; now proprietor of two factories and very generous in his treatment of his operatives, and a real blessing to the little town of Troy. From $1500 to $1800 a month goes into families there who at home attend to part of his horse-blanket manufacture. A Boston firm told him he could save $1000 a year by letting the work be done there in B. by sewing-machine. People like the sewing-machine work better, Mr. G. says. Still he told them that he preferred not to take the work away from the poor families in Troy.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *July* 23, 1865.

The telescope does well for things that are earthy. I have not yet turned it towards the heavens. I fear it will not show me women at their kneading troughs in Venus, or men making a cavalry

raid in Mars. In that case we have only to draw upon the imagination (which ought to be as good as anybody's, or which, if not, cannot, unhappily, be swapped off for another, as the telescope can be)....

Had the preliminary address been briefer, and Mr. A. and others also been mindful that long speeches will not really make life longer, but only the more tedious, there would have been nothing wanting to the complete success of "Commemoration Day" save a despotic lowering of the thermometer by about ten degrees. Yet, even with these excesses on the part of the mercury and of those who spoke for Mars, the day was an uncommonly gratifying one, and in the memory will soon seem perfect. It was a sad pleasure, from the dinner seats, to look up to the roll of names from time to time, and read —

1853		1857
Dwight		Dwight
	and	Perkins 1856
		Whittemore

It seemed to be giving visible assurance that the names of our two nephews would survive hundreds of years longer than had they quietly died at home. The living soldiers who were there might almost have envied the fame of the dead.

In the library their photographs were all to be seen under a glass case, framed, over the table. Mr. Sargent's son looked like an everyday acquaintance among them. My old friend, Manning F. Force, was in Cambridge on a furlough, now a Major-General. He made a good speech at the table. He bears a scar where a ball entered a little below the eye. The most interesting point of the dinner to me, even excepting the reception of General Meade, was the allusion of Mr. Loring to Brigadier-General Bartlett and his reception by the students and graduates and his attempt to respond. He is a slender, thoughtful stripling, only a three years' graduate, seeming like the Sir J. Richardson, of the North Pole Expedition, of whom the natives said that he would never kill a mosquito (evidently more tolerant in that regard than little Nellie Williamson). Mr. Loring called him up by saying that in a picture gallery in France (Bartlett's arm is shivered and one leg is gone) there is the likeness of an officer who holds the bridle of his horse by a hook, in the absence of an arm, and who is laced against the saddle, for want of a leg, but underneath is the inscription, "But the *heart* is still there." He then added (as a toast), "General Bartlett, — the *heart*

is still there." The applause was overpowering. As they insisted on his rising and moving towards the platform, he began to do so, and looked much as L. might had she been so caught. He had uttered a few words of attempted acknowledgment, when Colonel Lee, the marshal, relieved him, as there was a slight pause, by saying, "As was said to General Washington, 'Sit down,' General Bartlett, 'your modesty is equal to your valor.'" So it was, altogether, the most touching episode of the day.

The bells chimed in the forenoon. I thought I recognized a strain in "Cephas." Dr. Putnam's oration was all the better to me for not being far-fetched and paradoxical as he is apt to be, and as some people crave, just as they'd upset their cayenne bottle on their beefsteak were it not for the looks. To me the address was simple and earnest and natural. It said the right thing. I did not go there longing to be startled.

FROM M. E. W. TO R. H. W.

KEENE, *December* 23, 1865.

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

. . . We certainly have everything life can give to be grateful for, and chief of all our blessings is our present good health. I am not strong, but I am

very well, and do enjoy, to the utmost, being able to go about my house freely, and attending to my family cares. I am able to do a little, too, outside of my own family, and am quite interested in a sewing-school we have started, for seven or eight girls in our own parish, who are sadly neglected at home, and whom we hope to benefit, by personal intercourse and instruction. William has been very much occupied with organizing a Freedmen's Association here. He has succeeded in his object, and they have raised $500 for the support of a teacher in the field.

W. O. W. TO R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *January* 5, 1866.

. . . Our Christmas Eve service this year shone so much better than ever in consequence of gas that I had our last Sunday's afternoon service also in the evening. There were more than twice our usual hundred or so of afternoon hearers. Everybody seems so favorably disposed towards the experiment that we are going to have no afternoon service, but an evening one at 6.30 instead. We think that in a village of our size some roving youths will come in and be better employed than they might be elsewhere. . . .

The change was successful, for in April he writes:

"Preached all day yesterday. Was gratified to find some one hundred and eighty at our evening service, which seems thus far much more than to replace our abandoned afternoon service. We don't call it 'names,' however, 'vespers,' or anything else. The service is just like a common one."

The following letter, written by Mr. White after the death of his father-in-law, shows the warm place he held in his affections: —

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *April* 9, 1866.

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

It seemed long to wait, from the Monday morning when news first came of our Father Harding's death, till Thursday evening before I could see my dear wife. At two, Thursday, after my "Fast" service (I hope Dr. Ingersoll could look down and see how much I missed him), I took the cars for Springfield. . . .

That dear familiar church received a new and precious association, as we took leave there of the face that had always shone on us with so loving a greeting.

The picture of General Sherman (taken this

winter at St. Louis) is truly a most spirited painting. His wife said that she was "glad that there was so fine a likeness of her husband in existence." Our little girl (as I believe I wrote you), saw her grandfather, a few weeks since, put the finishing touches to this portrait.

In his outdoor life, he was also himself to the last. Passing up street (the 27th March, Tuesday before the Sunday of his death) to the cars, he shook his rod playfully, as he walked, at a friend on the opposite side of the street, saying, "I never felt more like it in my life." . . .

Pneumonia was regarded as his disease. He was conscious, seemingly, almost to the last.

The anniversary comes very close upon that of my own father's death. It is a comfort to think that both died in full mental strength. I have felt bitterly grieved by this event, more so than I could have believed, as we saw our Father H. so comparatively seldom, but he was a delightful companion and we were so sure of his love.

CHAPTER IX

LETTERS TO A CHILD

1860–1866

No picture of my father would be complete without giving some account of his sympathy with children. His pleasures were their pleasures, and they were never made to feel that they were any interruption in his out-of-door work. One of the qualities that endeared him most to his children was his habit of closing his eyes to their faults.

It seemed to be his greatest pleasure to take them, and the other little girls who were their companions, coasting on the big black sled. How well I remember the crisp freshness of those winter mornings! — the swift flight of the sled down the hill and across the icy pond at the bottom! We younger ones enjoyed it with little thought of the beauty of our surroundings, but in going over his letters, I can see how there was for him a touch of poetry in the scene.

One of his especial charms was his gift for story-telling. His tales were simple and realistic, but told with a vividness of detail and description

which endeared them to the heart of a child. A certain Polly Gray and her friend, Nancy Pike, one of whom lived on a farm, had a series of mild adventures which were made thrilling by the way in which they were told. There was also an imaginary visitor who sometimes came to our house by the name of Patty Tompkins. She was an early exponent of the theory of dual personality, for she entered into us at times. She was a most unpleasant person, being cross, irritable, and fault-finding or very wilful and determined. My father, feeling that we ourselves could do no wrong, knew that it must be Patty Tompkins who had taken possession of us, if things did not go in a satisfactory manner.

The animals on the place were another of our great interests. There were the pigeons, who were so tame that they would fly in at the open window and take corn out of my mother's hand; the numerous broods of young chickens, and always the joy of a mother cat and her young families; but never a dog. My father had a constitutional dislike to them.

These letters, which may seem to some a trivial interruption in a serious sketch, will give to others, as no words of mine can, a picture of what my father was in daily life in those early years: —

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

To a Four-year-old

Salem, *November* 29, 1860.

My dear little Eliza:—

Papa thanks you for your sweet little note. The "little Bonds" are pretty big Bonds now. They did n't get any story from me about Polly Gray. It is n't *every* little child that coaxes a story out of your papa, I can tell you.

O! such lots of turkeys as I saw in Boston yesterday, and in the Salem market yesterday. Grandma and Grandpa gave turkeys and raisins and flour to poor folks who called yesterday. One little girl came for something for her mamma. The mamma was a hundred years old all but two years, so that the little girl herself was just the age of your Grandma (76). Don't you want to know if I have bought Sally a new head, and if I have bought a pair of kid arms? Catch *me* telling! Good-bye, my darling little daughter; give a kiss to Mamma for me, and one to Minnie, and believe me

Your loving father,

William O. White.

Here is a kiss for your own wee self.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
Friday, November 20, 1863.

MY DEAR LITTLE DAUGHTER: —

We had a funny time, Mr. Hamilton and I, going to Hanover.

I left my rubbers, when we changed cars at Bellows Falls. That night (Tuesday night) we walked a long ways over a railroad bridge from White River Junction to West Lebanon. There we got into a big wagon, drawn by two horses, to go to Hanover, four miles off. O! how the mud did spatter, spatter, spatter!! It looked just like snow flying, by the light of the lantern on the big wagon.

After dinner at the tavern the next day, I looked for the new umbrella that I bought last week in Boston, and some thief had stolen it from under the table in the entry. It did not rain at the time. A man told me that it had been "gobbled up." "Pray, what is that?" said Papa. "Why, the students go round and steal umbrellas, and call it gobbling them up; one student had thirteen of them in his room last vacation that he had gobbled up." The night before, at a party at Professor Noyes's, some one went to the door, and gobbled up all the umbrellas, he said.

After buying me another umbrella, I walked

with Mr. Hamilton, to a big party (called a levee) at the College Library building. My umbrella I hid under my greatcoat, wearing it somewhat as a soldier would carry his sword. I also kept my hat in my hand. Not so with Jennie Hamilton's father. He left his five-dollar hat downstairs in the room they told him to. Alas, alas, alas! it was gobbled up, all gobbled up!! Nothing was left of it but a dirty old white hat which Mr. Hamilton flung down, as if it had been an old dish-cloth.

However, he was at last persuaded to wear the dirty old thing a little while, until he could buy another, down street.

This put Mrs. Brown, where Dr. Barstow boarded (and where he asked us to take tea) in mind of how her husband once, after a great levee at the President's in Washington, some years ago, wanted his hat to go home with. The black servant at the door brought him a very shabby hat. He sent him for another. Then the negro brought him a very, *very* shabby hat. "Stop, this is not the one," quoth he. Then the negro brought him a *very*, *very*, VERY shabby hat. "Why," said Mr. Brown, "mine is a good hat." "Law, Massa," said the negro, "all de good hats been gone dis two hour!!"

Good-bye, darling. Kiss Mamma for me, give my love to Cousin Henry and to Cousin Fanny and believe me, always your loving Father,

WILLIAM O. WHITE.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *July* 23, 1865.

. . . All that the dear daughter seems to need to make her supremely happy there is a flesh and blood little girl of about her age. But with older people to be her companions, and with the kittens, and swallows and chickens, and red-winged blackbirds and the sparrows' nests, and the ducks and pigeons at the neighboring house, and the blue sea, and her books and dolls, I think she will not need a great many handkerchiefs with which to wipe away her tears. If she does, let her send to me and I will buy her an extra dozen. Ask her if the tears will not be salter for being formed down in that salt air.

KEENE, *April* 10, 1866.

DEAR ELIZA: —

Mr. Billings brought in one of the seven chickens Sunday morning (a black one) which he had rescued from a vile cur.

The little lame chicken got better. But, O, that

afternoon, Kitty beheld the vile cur making off very rapidly with two more of the seven chickens. They have never been seen or heard of, but the vile cur has been seen, but never will be seen again.

Mr. Billings went to the owner and bought him for two dollars, Mr. Billings killed the vile cur; Mr. Billings buried the vile cur, we all breathe freer, especially the mother of the chickens; and I am, in a great hurry, your aff. father,

WILL. O. WHITE.

Nellie B. got your last letter and was glad.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *April* 14, 1866.

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER: —

I am very sorry to be obliged to tell you what will make you feel a little sad. You must not allow it, however, to trouble you more than a minute or two. One of our little family here has bitterly deceived us. It is not Kitty; it is not Julia. Who then? Alas, it is, it is, it is, — can it be, — yes, it is, it is, I lament to say it, but it is, — too true, — too true — it is

Pussy!

Ah! the lamentable discovery!

Fred Thompson the Discoverer.

Fred looked into the kitten barrel yesterday. Fred saw three fat kittens. Fred saw one fat cat. But Fred saw what did not belong there. He saw two wings, and they were wings of different colors, and they did not look like birds' wings. Your father was called in "on consultation." He pronounced the wings to be chickens' wings. Was Papa enraged? Did he order that Pussy should share the fate of "the vile cur"? No, Papa was grieved. He was disappointed. He remembered, also, that Pussy was your cat. Kitty turned pale with surprise and vexation and sorrow, — Catharine Elliot, I mean.

Pussy by this time had removed her family from the barrel. She fled to the woods, — the cellar woods, I mean. No sooner had Fred noticed the barrel-wings than Pussy's conscience troubled her, and her guilty feelings drove her into solitude.

Learning this morning that in all probability she and her voracious brats have devoured four of the remaining five early chickens that were rescued from "the vile cur," we have shut Pussy up in the rockaway house in our barn. When her kittens are hungry enough to creep out of their lurking-place, they shall join her. As you and your mother had not quite decided which kitten shall be killed, I

shall decide for you, and have the buff one killed. It ought to have been done long ago. Then, either I shall dispose of all my chickens, — every one, — by selling them, or giving them away, or I shall try and get the cat boarded for the next few months at Miss Mary Nourse's. As she has been so good a cat, I do not want to have her killed until we have tried to get her boarded. Perhaps if we dispose of all her kittens, we may raise the chickens, after they are in the yard. The cat and kittens ought to have been kept in the shed, while the hens were in the cellar. We can all see that now. But who could have suspected Pussy? The temptation was too strong for her. She was more of a cat than she was of a saint, after all. You and your mother can be thinking over whether you had rather have no chickens and keep the cat and two kittens all the time at home, or have the cat at Miss Nourse's a little while this summer; and keep the chickens.

I thought how much worse I should have felt had it been my child, rather than my child's cat that had in any way deceived me.

Your affec. father,

W. O. White.

KEENE, *Sunday night, April* 15, 1866.

DEAR LITTLE ELIZA:—

This is the next chapter in the drama of the kitten and chicken families of 1866.

It proved, last evening, that Pussy had put into the stomachs of herself "and children three," some dozen chickens, in all. Just after this terrific announcement, falling like a thunderbolt upon our quiet household (although we are still blessed with twenty-five living chickens, and with the prospect of a new brood next Friday, and still another brood a fortnight from next Saturday; and with two or three more hens that cluck so that they seem to say, "Give me a chance, give me a chance, I'll risk the cats, I'll risk the dogs, I'll risk the rain, I'll risk the sk—s; do give me a chance to hatch my eggs";) just after the terrific announcement on page first, Mr. George Nourse drove up with butter. He agreed to board Pussy and her two surviving brats, — the buff and white, and the grey. So, a basket was found; pussy and the two kittens were deposited therein and a cloth tied over the top of the basket.

"Good-bye, Mr. Nourse: good-bye, Pussy."

The sound of the wagon-wheels dies away in the distance. Morning comes.

"Well, Kitty, how does the house seem without a cat?"

"Indeed, Sir, but Pussy has come *back*, and came up from the cellar this morning!"

"With her kittens?"

"No. I put her in the rockaway house again. I guess she did n't go all the way to Mr. Nourse's, she came back so soon."

So mother and children are separated for a while. I shall try to get Pussy carried to her brats at Mr. Nourse's, if they are there, before many days.

Meantime you will agree with me that this adds one more strange, exciting, peculiar, wonderful, curious, odd, unexpected chapter to the romantic history of the pets of the White family in Keene for the year 1866. In the midst of these raids by the four footed beasts upon our poultry, I am happy to be able to say that our baby pigeon is in "fine feather," safe in his lofty nook, from

> Paw of cat or dog
> Or rude and grunting hog. . . .

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *April* 19, 1866.

DEAR ELIZA: —

Such a chase as Kitty and I have been having for the chickens! With the thermometer at 70 de-

grees, we thought that they surely could endure coming up from the damp cellar. But how the black scamps and the brown scamps and the grey scamps, and the scamp of all sorts of colors, jumped behind pots, and kettles, and baskets, and boards, and woodboxes, and woodpiles, and refrigerators, and chimneys, and coal hods, and cellar-doors; — it would require a livelier pen than mine to describe.

We have now put the remnants of the first three broods under one hen. She has the lame black one, sole survivor of the brood of seven, and she has ten others. Imagine her in her coop under the china-closet window, with her brood of eleven. The potato-cellar hen you may see, in your mind's eye, under the kitchen window with a brood of thirteen.

"Only twenty-four!" you will say. Suffer me to correct you a little. Another black mother is hatching her chickens to-day. She has five already and I think may have three, four or five more by to-morrow.

Perhaps we shall put her where your bantam used to be, behind the cellar-door, close by your play-room.

In a fortnight another hen will probably hatch her chickens.

Your pigeon is as white as snow, and by another week will very likely be showing himself on his front-door step, to the little girl to whom he belongs.

The expedition to Mr. Nourse's was safely made by Julia and Kitty on Monday afternoon. You have heard of such a thing as "A cat in a bag." Such was the situation of your own puss during the journey performed by J. and K. to Mr. Nourse's.

One of her children crept up to Pussy with every mark of filial affection. Yet I am informed that "at first" their mother "did not seem to care much for them." But I should have been sorry to have had her love them so well as she did the chickens. It was better that she did not "love them enough to eat them."

The cat has not been here since, so we conclude that her home for the present, at Mrs. Nourse's, suits her.

The old Dorking began to sit yesterday. She has eighteen eggs. It's the same hen, which, two years ago, sat on eighteen eggs, hatched nineteen, and brought up twenty chickens!

CHAPTER X

LATER YEARS IN KEENE

1866–1876

THESE later years in Keene from the close of the Civil War to 1876 were filled with many activities for the minister and his wife. If there was no longer the zest of novelty with which they began the long pastorate in 1851, they had formed ties which time had only strengthened, and middle-age had not taken away any of their enthusiasm. Besides the parish cares there were many outside interests which are alluded to in the following letters. A minor one, which gave my father great pleasure, was his correspondence with Dr. James Martineau, who consulted him in regard to the authorship of some American hymns.

No sketch of my father's life in Keene would be complete without some account of his relations with his brother ministers. In those days, when Unitarians were so often considered heretics, it is pleasant to see how he won his way and made warm friends with those of a different faith. Chief among them was Dr. Barstow, the Orthodox minister, old enough to be his father, a dignified figure,

typical of the former times. Between these men of different ages and widely different temperaments there existed the most cordial and friendly relations. There was also Dr. Renouf, the Episcopal clergyman, a contemporary of Mr. White's, and Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Barstow's assistant, who was for a time our next-door neighbor. He and my father were associated in their lighter hours of relaxation, once taking a horseback journey together.

My father gives a vivid account of the Methodist Conference in the spring of the year 1866. In a letter of April 10 to his wife, he says: "The Methodist guests have not come, ours, I mean. I have virtually provided for twenty-one of the brethren." And he goes on to tell of the money he subscribed himself, and raised from other people for their accommodation.

April 13. "I will now tell you a little about the Methodist Conference here. I was introduced by name to them. Bishop Simpson stood up and took me by the hand; they all bowed and what could I do but bow too? The next second Mr. Clark, the Baptist minister, was introduced in like manner. Each minister was called by name yesterday morning, and the presiding elder in his district would

reply, 'Nothing against Brother Smith.' There was one man, however, against whom they did have something. The presiding elder thought his failure — pecuniarily — arose from his being 'late' in everything. He hoped he would n't be too late in getting into the Kingdom. This was prefaced by saying that it took him six weeks to travel some fifty miles, and as many to return. But a committee was appointed to investigate the case."

April 14. "I heard yesterday afternoon some of the young ministers who are about to be admitted to the Conference give their 'experience.' One interested me more than the rest. He had never had a 'praying father and mother.' When his uncle, however, came to see them, they had prayers and he felt so strangely that he begged another evening that he might go to bed before prayers. But there on the bed the prayer smote him as he overheard his uncle pray for the poor 'sick' boy. ('Ah, I was not sick, only sin-sick.') That very uncle, an aged man, was sitting in the pulpit yesterday, and must have enjoyed hearing the young man, as he summed up his feelings, not by talking about reward and glory in heaven, as some of them did, or a 'rainbow arch,' but by saying with much emotion, 'I want to be *full* of Christ.

I want to be a living epistle, known and read of all men!'

Almost every one of these young men had much to say of the influence of their mothers as paramount to everything else they had enjoyed in the way of help and strength."

To R. H. W.

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS,
April 17, 1866.

. . . I came down yesterday after an interesting Methodist week. I had Professor Harrington, of Wesleyan Seminary, Middletown, Connecticut, (Professor of Latin, but a clergyman), for my guest, and a delightful Christian, genial gentleman I found him.

The New Hampshire Methodist Conference met in Keene, on occasion of its annual session.

Bishop Simpson presided.

I enjoyed becoming acquainted with a number of the brethren, several of whom dined and took tea with me.

Mr. Stubbs, of Nashua, preached for me in the morning, and Mr. (or Dr.) Barrows, of Sanbornton, in the evening.

I was urged to hear the Bishop at the Town Hall

in the forenoon, and did so. I was delighted with his simplicity, devoutness, and unction. It was a sermon that could not fail to do good to the immense audience.

Previous to that I attended their "Love Feast," and deeply enjoyed the snatches of hymns which were sung. Then hearing my friend Professor Harrington in the afternoon, and Dr. Barrows at my own church in the evening, and a half-hour's talk after that in the Town Hall, I found I had had — eight solid hours of meeting, in one day, more than on any previous Sunday in my life; more, probably, than ever again; doubtless more than ever fell to you in any one Sunday of your long life. And I survived it bravely.

. . . One nice old Methodist minister said, "I have heard of you from a Baptist family where I stop, and from some of the Methodists, and I rejoice that my Brother Wagner (our late Methodist minister in Keene) had the courtesy and Christian charity to exchange with you. I would, if I were not at the other end of the State."

Ever, dear mother, with thanks for your letter, I am yours in a Springfield store,

Most affectionately,

WILL. O. W.

There was the reverse of this picture, however, for one minister in town, "the young Leach," referred to in the following letters, was violently prejudiced against liberal Christians, remarking that one Unitarian church did more harm in a town than twenty liquor saloons. This led to Mr. White's giving a series of sermons on Sunday evenings in which he expounded the doctrines by which those of his own faith lived and died.

May 9, 1866.

My last Sunday evening doctrinal sermon was on Human Nature, in which I handled Total Depravity. The church was as full as I have yet seen it (leaving out the morning Sunday-School children), fuller (than in the morning) of grown folks. Several people from the Societies come statedly. Meantime, the young Orthodox "Leach" advertises us, by saying he knows the "Unitarians would be glad to get rid of half the Bible," etc.

Four persons were named Sunday for our July communion; one young man and three ladies. This will make nine men (in three and a half years) and nine women, besides two men and women by letter. Some of these are grand young men, who take hold well of our charitable subscriptions. So that the

parish, as a working body (spite of our sad losses by death and emigration), in fifteen years, seems much more desirable than when I came. . . . There are some ten men connected with the Sunday-School Library and as teachers. . . .

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *May* 4, 1866.

The spring finds our parish in as good a position, seemingly, as I can remember it. I have been here a year and a month longer than any minister they have had. Let me name persons who since Fast week have taken seats. . . .[He goes on to name seven families who wanted seats, and says:] It is very hard stowing them about, and we really need a new church.

Our evening service on Sunday, begun at Christmas, still works well. We had, Sunday before last, some two hundred and fifty out in the evening; usually, a hundred less than that. I have been asked to preach some doctrinal sermons in the evening. The evening when our attendance was larger than usual, I preached in regard to the support which our faith gives people when dying; with numerous illustrations, such as Dr. Channing and others. 'T was in consequence of a young "Leach," who, "supplying" now for six months,

as Dr. Barstow's coadjutor, publicly said in a sermon that "no Unitarian or Universalist — did he believe — ever died believing in those views." When they appeared to, 't was the result of narcotics, or they recanted.

Where there are so many young and unthinking persons 'round, it is well enough to take occasion to refute such calumnies. On the whole, the young "Leach" referred to has been a good pudding-stick in the community. . . .

To M. E. W.

KEENE, *April* 19, 1866.

I made quite a long call on Mr. and Mrs. Kilburn. Mr. Kilburn seemed almost intoxicated with Keene; they both seemed perfectly delighted, every house, however small, seemed so neat and clean in its surroundings. He had travelled a thousand miles to look for a home, but had seen nothing that would at all answer, until he came to Keene. Mr. Kilburn was delighted to hear some old-fashioned Unitarian preaching again.

The parish had increased so much that it threatened to outgrow its old accommodations and in 1868 my father was occupied in putting through the project of building a new church. It was a great

happiness to him to see this wish fulfilled. He was also much interested in raising money towards the $100,000 fund for the American Unitarian Association.

Apropos of raising money in Keene to build a Methodist church, my father tells this story: "Another brother (minister) commended the example of a young man in another town, who, to secure a new church, gave twice as much as he was worth: giving a thousand dollars when he'd only five hundred in the world: telling them that if he should 'backslide,' he wanted it fixed so the church should n't lose. Query, whether the subscription was not a bit of a backslide, five hundred dollars less than nothing. But at forty-two the man died, worth just forty-two thousand dollars. The Lord had prospered him. Such happens to the man who gives twice what he's worth, it seems, an early heaven and an earthly fortune."

My mother's interests in Keene were almost as varied as my father's. She took an active part in the Sewing Circle, and during her later years there, she had a Sunday-School class of boys to whom she read once a week at her own house. She was one of the founders of the Invalids' Home, and she

started the Social Union, a club for young men who met in the evening to read and play games.

My father wrote to me apropos of the Social Union [December 16, 1873], "Your mother has been flying about 'like one possessed' (with a lively idea) this last week, picking up money right and left, filching it from Temperance men, diving down into liquor saloons for it, — and all to open a room where young men shall have a place that they can call their own, to read or to chat in. She has probably told you that the different parishes (or members in them) coöperate in this experiment."

To E. O. W.

January 4, 1874.

You said that you would like to know about the Temperance matters here. The "Sentinel," which I will send, will tell you in a measure. The "notice" was given to the different sellers of the iniquity on Monday and very little immediate difficulty ensued. The Committee were courteously received. Tuesday evening, at nine, Harding's saloon in the building where your Grammar School was, was as dark as a pocket and so was Pike's. In fact, Lettenmayer's saloon is "busted" under Cheshire Bank, and sign gone, and Kelley (Apothecary) has

failed. The streets have certainly been much quieter. Meantime, I think, the Committee mean to prosecute any violations of the law which shall come to their knowledge. Although, doubtless, there may be sales still, they must perforce be less flagrant and open, which fact makes the streets pleasanter to walk through, at least.

It was so very rainy last evening that inasmuch as Bishop Hugh Latimer had waited more than three hundred years before holding forth in Keene, I persuaded him to wait a fortnight longer, as I thought that 't was a pity to wait so many centuries for such a sorry evening as last evening was.

A fortnight later he writes: —

"I should like to read you sometime or other, the sermon of Latimer which I read the other evening at the church parlor. One sentence I will give you now. 'Consider it well, I had rather ye should come with a naughty mind to hear the word of God for novelty, or for curiosity to hear some pastime, than be away. I had rather you should come, as the tale is of the gentlewoman of London; one of her neighbors met her in the street, and said,—

"'"Mistress, whither go ye?"

"'"Marry," said she, "I am going now to St. Thomas of Acres to the sermon; I could not sleep all the last night, and I am going now thither; I never failed of a good nap there."

"'And so I had rather ye would go a napping to the sermons than not to go at all: for with what mind soever ye come, though ye come for an evil purpose, yet peradventure, ye may chance to be caught ere you go; the preacher may chance to catch you on his hook.'

"This particular sermon was preached before King Edward Sixth, April 12, 1549. The good man must then have been nearly eighty, for he was about eighty-five when in 1555 he was burned at Oxford."

My father begins one of his letters to me with some spicy nonsense verses which he invents for the occasion, and he adds: —

"Pardon the rhyming, my beloved daughter, but I am fresh from handling the seven hundred and ninety-seven hymns which came to me an hour or two ago from Rev. James Martineau 'with the Editor's grateful regards.' I am very much pleased with the volume, although I miss hymns which I should be glad to see there, and discover familiar hymns that had disappeared from the

more recent books, and I see new hymns of whose existence I was not aware, and which promise to be valuable. Of course I have had no time to give the book a thorough examination yet.

"I have been enjoying the life of Colonel Timothy Pickering this week, and as there are two more large volumes, I shall have it to enjoy, at intervals, for some time. . . . As I well remember the valiant Colonel who sat two pews in front of us at church, and who died when I was eight years old, the life of this trusted companion of General Washington in war, and his Secretary of State, afterwards, in peace, has double interest for me. You will sometime be interested in the life of Schiller by Carlyle, which I have also been lately reading. It gives some account of Schubert, whose music, I see that 'Perabo' is advertised to play in Boston. Poor Schubert led a wild and weary and imprisoned life. If his music reflects his troubled passions at all, there must be something restless and exciting in it."

To E. O. W.

DEAR SOUL: —

To thee I wrote last night, but specially am I anxious to know when you get the letter. For twist

and twirl it, had I to, in order to jam it into the gills of the mail-bag at the depot. It contained a hymn that I copied from Dr. Martineau's new book. . . .

We're glad the G. S. Hale matter is so snugly arranged, and that you go also to Mrs. Parker. It is a good part of your education (which often best goes on insensibly) to meet these cultured people and join in conversation with them.

I think my opportunity of seeing agreeable and cultivated families in Cambridge was an essential part of my own training, as I look back on it.

I could much better have spared "conic sections" and "calculus," etc., and a lot of things which were only valuable as "mental discipline," and which did not give the mental discipline which exercising my mind in conversation with sensible and scholarly people, did.

But no more now from thy father

W. O. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
January 24, 1874.

To E. O. W.

. . . I often think how he (your grandfather) would enjoy such a thing as this (which I quote

from Mrs. Somerville's recollections) and many other things which I see or hear, or read. There was simply some rough water like that which we had in our Cape Cottage sail.

"Mind how you steer, George; remember I trust in you," quoth Mrs. Somerville's mother.

George laughed, and said, "Dinna trust in me, leddy; trust in God Almighty."

Our mother (down below) called out in perfect terror, "Dear me! has it come to that?"

We burst out laughing, skipper and all.

BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT,
Tuesday, June 2, 1874, 7 A.M.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—

I reached Keene in good time on Friday morning. . . .

I speedily took to the garden, watching the growth of each batch of blossoms on the various trees and hearkening to catbirds and golden robins.

A catbird on Saturday morning sang for fifteen minutes a variety of snatches worth a fifty-cent ticket much more than concerts at the Town Hall have been for which I have paid this sum. But I suppose any piece of paper would have suited him

equally well. I have discovered three new birds' nests since my return; a chipping-bird's on the Porter tree, and what I think must be a yellow-bird's on an apple tree by the gooseberry bushes (it is so white with wool that you can hardly tell it from the blossoms), and a curious, deftly made nest on the buckthorn hedge near the Astrachan tree whose inmates I have not yet seen, but upon whose privacy I fear that the cats will intrude before I see it again.

To E. O. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
Tuesday evening, April 13, 1875.

I trust that you are not having our snow-storm which has been quietly proceeding since two o'clock, and which I should like better, were I not vexed to think of the robins and other birds who have not considered themselves invited all the way from the South to see this sort of a "crumb-spread," and on so large a scale. It ought to call out a crumb-spread of a different sort. Well, I suppose we should borrow trouble about the way things go on in the other planets, if we only knew that they go on at all. He who makes birds and snow-storms both, can adjust their mutual econ-

omy, I fancy, while we turn to those things for which we know we are responsible.

To E. O. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *January* 22, 1876.
Saturday, 10 *min. before* 3 P.M.

Miss B. dined here to-day. There is a rug a-lining, and such like matters going on. Yesterday a sort of waltz and country-dance superadded went on among the pieces of furniture in the dining-room, judging from their postures, and the carpets were removed for their freer movements.

To R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
February 7, 1874.

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

I have been at three very dry funerals lately; one, — that of a "Poor-Farm" septuagenarian whose last hours were beguiled by the assurance of her spouse that he did n't believe that she meant to die; the other that of a septuagenarian bachelor here who was commonly in close league with spirits, — but alas! not those of the just; the third the septuagenarian husband of a lady (in a neighboring town), whose first husband's funeral I had attended there fifteen years ago. "A good provider" was

about all I could hear regarding him, as he, too, provided too lavishly for himself, things which hindered rather than helped. One thing was pleasant; the lonely fifteen-year-old orphan of the funeral (fifteen years ago) was now transformed into a prosperous manufacturer.

To R. H. W.

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
March 2, 1874.

MY DEAR MOTHER: —

We had a curious speech at our Temperance meeting Thursday evening, at the Town Hall. I had just finished talking, when a zealous Advent preacher got up, and with great earnestness represented "coming to Jesus" to be the only basis in this reform. Nothing availed him until this. After stating in similar terms what in the way of spirit he gave, he added, "and I gave Jesus my pipe and my tobacco box." And this, with great solemnity. I suppose this phraseology is canonized in his mind, "giving everything to Jesus," good — or bad.

This letter closes the correspondence between my father and his stepmother, who died on November 28, 1874, at the advanced age of ninety years,

seven months and ten days, retaining her vigor of mind up to the last.

To Dr. James Martineau

Keene, New Hampshire,
June 7, 1876.

In your reasoning with Tyndall, I am reminded of one who tries to argue with a child, but who all the time feels that it is more than half hopeless. The child must grow: the basis is not there, on which to build. So Tyndall must be "born again" (that's the long and the short of it), to sympathize with Cudworth and you. I am informed that he was brought up in a rigid and ungenial Presbyterianism. No wonder that certain men of this fashion may feel more coolly than spiritually-minded men can, about the question of immortality. One lifetime might do as well as twenty to peep into gases. For that other "a liquid *immensum infinitumque*" eternity can be none too long. It may be want of charity in me, but however grand their intellects or achievements, some of these men remind me of "Undine" the water-sprite, without a soul. . . .

But your task is eminently imperative, since so many young people are carried away by the word

"Science," and are ready to take every new theory in that department for gospel.

In the summer of 1876 Mr. White in a characteristic letter asked his parish for leave of absence for a year as he wanted to take his family to Europe. He says: —

On the first day of August it will be twenty-five years since you asked me to become your minister, and the first day of October twenty-five years will have passed since I was installed as your pastor.

I desire to be relieved from the care of the pulpit and the parish for a year from and after the first Sunday, the first day of October next.

When you kindly consented to my having four Sundays in each and every year to myself, nothing was said about my having fifty-two Sundays at the end of twenty-five years. I should have then been appalled at the thought of these twenty-five lengthening years, and you might have deemed it inappropriate, in dealing with this young man of thirty, to offer any premium for his remaining a quarter of a century among you.

So long as I had the health, and could gain a respite, annually, from care by pulpit exchanges in

August, I was not careful, commonly, to ask the Trustees to fill the pulpit by supply for more than two Sundays. If an absence of fifty-two Sundays should seem a long one to some people, I trust that they will bear in mind that I have labored some thirty-nine or forty Sundays during my stay, when, by the terms of my settlement, I was not thus required; and that they will also remember that while numerous ministers have been absent from their posts during this period, for the space of a year, more or less, there has been but one month out of these nearly three hundred months upon some day of which I have not been in Keene.

And having arrived at the age of fifty-five, I am reminded that there is a risk in postponing a journey, which I am more anxious to take on behalf of my family than on my own account.

And so, dear friends, I leave the case in your hands, and remain, with deep regard,

Affectionately your friend and pastor,

WILL: O. WHITE.

My father and mother, as has already been shown, were both of them extremely fond of out-of-door life, and the last few years in Keene they could indulge this taste with greater freedom than

ever, as my father had his own horse, a practical family beast, able to turn from drawing wood from our woodlot, or bringing back barrels of apples from the orchard my father had now acquired at the other end of the town, or potatoes from the farm he had bought on the top of Beech Hill, to taking my mother on her daily drive. He was a somewhat plodding and stupid-looking animal, of irreproachable white, and when we drove ourselves, it was hard to get him to go beyond a discreet and decorous pace, but the minute he felt the touch of the hand of our man on the reins, he became another animal and went in a fleet and spirited manner.

It is hard to say during which season these drives were the more beautiful. There were the expeditions for mayflowers when the woods were full of spicy odors, and the first hints of early spring; and the first picnic, perhaps including the crowning of a May Queen; and there were the summer drives when the red lilies filled the fields, or the shy cardinal flowers could sometimes be found; there were the summer picnics, when the family and their guests took their supper by Beaver Brook Falls or the Ashuelot River, or took their dinner by Dublin Pond, whose shores in those halcyon days

were free to all comers. Perhaps the most exhilarating of all were the autumn drives to the orchard, when the air was crisp and bracing, and the maples along the way were flaming red and yellow, and the road was edged with the deep-blue fringed gentians. Winter, too, had its especial charm when the sleigh sped swiftly over the snow, and the pines and hemlocks were bent under their white burden.

Happy is the child who has grown up in the country and has been allowed to be the chosen companion of his parents. One may lose the inheritance of money, but this other inheritance remains as long as memory lasts.

CHAPTER XI

EUROPE AND LAST YEAR IN KEENE

1876–1878

On October 7, 1876, Mr. White sailed with his family for England. The voyage was very different from the one he took in 1841, although, compared with the luxurious boats of to-day, the Batavia was a primitive affair. The year spent in Europe was filled to the brim with varied experiences, all of them full of interest. My father had the great pleasure of showing us the scenes which were doubly interesting to him on account of the associations of thirty-five years earlier; while to my mother, who had not been abroad since she was a child of two, Europe was a land of enchantment. The journey the travellers took was the ordinary one, but it was made memorable by the unusually keen powers of enjoyment which both my father and mother possessed.

The acquaintance with Dr. Martineau, which had been so pleasantly begun over his hymn-book, ripened into a friendship when he and my father met face to face. Dr. Martineau was a man with such remarkable spiritual and mental gifts that it

would be hard to imagine any one better suited to stand as one's ideal of what the race might be. No one who has ever seen him can forget a personality so unusual and so full of grace and kindliness. At this time he was a little past seventy with silvery hair and features that were clear-cut and noble. His delightful voice and courteous manner compelled the attention of all his listeners, while the force and charm of his language made any subject, no matter how spiritual or ethical, seem vividly interesting even to the youngest ears.

After a few weeks in London which were made memorable not only by the sights of the city, but by meeting various people of interest, the travellers took a trip through some of the cathedral towns, and crossed to France. My mother describes in her journal the Paris of those days: —

"Some of the pleasantest things we do are the little accidental things that we happen into, going to and coming from our regular expeditions. We drop in at a Catholic shop, for instance, filled with lovely wax baby Jesuses asleep in the manger, with his mother and Joseph and the wise men and the cattle all kneeling around him and we find sweet little Catholic pictures on cards, and it grows dark and we come out to find it raining a flood. We

wander about on the glistering pavements up and down in front of the brilliantly lighted shops, utterly ignorant as to which way we ought to go. We hail an omnibus, but it is not going to the Arc d'Étoile. We hail a *fiacre*, the *cocher* shakes his head and says "Pris"; we try the tram-way, no, that will carry us in the wrong direction. We inquire our way to the river to take the Bateaux omnibus, but that is a ten minutes' walk. We start, however, to find our way there, but the streets are so narrow, and so dark, and so full of vehicles that we turn back once more to try for a *fiacre*. We see, by the lighted windows again, the strange-looking crowd hurrying by: a woman under an umbrella, with her cap border flying back, her dress held up very high — a priest in his black, broad-brimmed hat and his long black dress tied at the waist with a black cord and tassel or a wide sash. He rushes by holding up his petticoats as his female neighbor does, . . . the father of a family with his loaf of bread a yard and a half long — rowdy men who smell of brandy, — the street-sweepers with their brooms sending the mud flying all over you; at last a *fiacre* draws up."[1]

From France we went to Italy, spending the

[1] From *After Noontide*.

rest of the winter and early spring chiefly in Rome, Naples, Florence, and Venice, and going over the Cornice Pass into Switzerland in May. My mother thus describes the drive: —

"Before long we began to go up hill and were in ecstasies of delight. . . . And now we begin to see a little snow here and there, and patches of white flowers springing up just on its edge. What can they be? They look like crocuses, say I, and so they were. And all that day we kept seeing acres of them, with a few blue ones scattered among them. . . . The snow grows deeper and deeper, until at the top we drive through walls of snow twenty-eight feet high, although our road is quite open. The falling snow prevents our seeing a thing, except here and there we get a glimpse into an abyss of surging vapor, and we know that we are on the edge of a fearful precipice. Occasionally, too, a gust of wind blows aside the snow for a moment, and we see a gray, dim mountain peak close above us. . . . We go through galleries cut out of the solid rock, and the clear blocks of ice are piled up on either side, so that we really are in a tunnel of ice. And over the window, instead of rushing waters, we see frozen cascades, and feel as if we had found out where the hoar frost is made

and the birthplace of the winter storms. . . . Before long the sun is shining upon us, and we can look back and up to the mountain summit we have just crossed, and feel as if the winter we found there must be a delusion, only that there is the snow, white and cold against the sky. As we drew near Brigue we got out to get a view, which was one of the most exquisite I ever saw. We looked down a vista between two hills, out on to a plain far away, and winding through it was the Rhone, looking like a thread of silver, and beyond the plain was range after range of distant hills, each one softer than the last, until you could not tell where they ended and the clouds began. And the whole scene was flooded with the most wonderful sunset, yellow and red, streaming out through heavy clouds. I thought of the hills of Beulah and the heavenly country beyond."[1]

In September Mr. White and his family spent a few days on one of the estates of the brother of the Scottish friend whom he met in travelling in 1841. The customs of the household seemed to take one back into a land of romance, and it was as if one were living for a time in a novel by Sir Walter Scott. At dinner the host was dressed in a black

[1] From *After Noontide.*

velvet jacket adorned by various blazing orders, while he wore a kilted skirt made of the plaid of his clan, which showed his bare knees; and a retinue of servants waited on table, some in kilts, some in velvet short-clothes and gold-laced coats, and just before dessert a piper in Scotch costume, something like his master's, but less elaborate, marched around the table playing old Highland tunes on the bagpipes. He had an air of such self-importance that one felt that he envied no man, but was thoroughly satisfied with the position in which it had pleased Providence to place him. The ladies of the house completed the picture by wearing low-necked evening dresses of soft colors and shimmering texture, so that the child of the party remarked in an awed whisper that they looked like Cinderella at the ball.

The year of rest and refreshment came to an end at last and Mr. White went back to his congenial work and duties as minister of the Keene parish. He had hoped to round out his thirty years of preaching in the town which he loved so well, but in the autumn of 1878, only a year after his return from Europe, he had reason to think that there was a certain element in the parish who wanted a younger man, so he sent in his resigna-

tion which was not accepted by an almost unanimous vote. But nevertheless he held to his determination, and went to Boston with his family for the winter of 1878 and 1879.

The following letter written to his friend, Edward Everett Hale, shows the way in which, while regretting that his term of service was over in Keene, he looked forward with his usual cheerful philosophy to the life that lay before him: —

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE,
December 21, 1878.

MY DEAR EDWARD: —

In the hasty interview which I had with you, that morning, in the horse-car, I failed to thank you for your very kind and thoughtful note, at the time of my resigning the pulpit here. "*Laudari a laudato*," is no less agreeable a sensation than it was when the words in which the sentiment is expressed, were more alive than "dead."

We have had everything to enjoy in being here; and to be in this world still, and in so much better health than when I was younger, to be in the world yet at an age when so many wiser and better ministers have already left it, is something to be thankful for, on the part of one who has so many ties to

life, even should he be henceforth appointed the easier task of a listener instead of that of a speaker.

I am led to think that the sudden collapsing in one's first harness, a boon so often desired, must make many persons, in this world, quite insensible to the sort of hold which they have had on some hearts.

Going to Europe, or resigning, — the latter feat especially, — brings out sundry testimonies, of which too many worthy ministers may die without the sight.

So, however much I might have been glad to do in a better way, I have already had more than my share of good-will and kindly appreciation among those whom I have tried to help; and am very content to lay by my arrows in the quiver, before the bow is broken.

Thankfully and affectionately yours,

WILL: ORNE WHITE.

When it was found that Mr. White was really going to leave the town where he had lived and worked so faithfully for twenty-seven years, there were many of his parishioners who could not be reconciled to the idea, while the feeling of regret in the other parishes was almost as strong, and for

years after he had severed his official connection with his parish, the spiritual tie between them was still a close one. He was summoned over and over again to Keene to attend a wedding or a funeral. His parishioners' sorrows were always very close to his heart, and if he was not called upon to take part in the funeral service, he would write a letter of consolation full of his own strong faith in immortality and in the power of the human soul to get sustenance from the griefs and trials which seemed the hardest to bear. This is one of the many letters of the kind that he wrote after leaving Keene: —

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
December 4, 1893. *Monday afternoon.*

MRS. F. A. FAULKNER

MY DEAR FRIEND: — I am with you in spirit at this moment, and the familiar dwelling, with the sorrowing group who gather there, seems as present to me as it did again and again, long years ago.

It has been a pleasure to me, twice within a few years, when travelling, to meet Charles, and to note what a cheery, thoughtful, manly young fellow he had become.

You were looking forward to seeing him once more established near you, and the sudden rupture of these happy expectations must indeed seem like a dream. And at such moments, does not the whole of life sometimes seem so, too; a faint foreshadowing of something beyond of a nature that is enduring? "A city that hath foundations" seems then to rise before us: the better home seems to open its portals to us in vision, and the dear one whose footstep has scarce ceased to echo near the earthly threshold, is rapturously welcomed by kindred and companions whose look testifies how eagerly they have been awaiting him!

From such a mount of vision we seem to behold both worlds, and, for the moment, to realize how a brave, loving, ingenuous spirit is exchanging the "hope deferred," the restless competitions, the baffling uncertainties of the earthly voyage for the glad and restful anchorage beyond.

Yet, as we come back to the stern realities of a darkened earthly home, we cry out, "Where, O! where, more needed than here?" At length, however, we feed lovingly upon the recollections bound up in the past; how the face smiles for us again, how the merry greeting rings on the air, how many and many half forgotten scenes stamp themselves

afresh upon the tablets of memory! Then we realize how much is really left to us of the friend whose life was so interwoven with our own, and, as we glance into the future, Death seems more and more like the good Angel, who, as our turn comes, will lead us onward to a more soul-satisfying union with him than Earth ever afforded.

Your old friend,

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE.

My lifelong friend, Ellen Day Hale, thus writes of my father's sermons and prayers during those years in Keene: —

"Your father's preaching was more of an influence upon me, as I look back on my youth, than any one's except my own dear father's; and yet I have heard many of the preachers who are called great. His prayers, too, were a great deal to me as time went on; it became a part of the happiness I looked forward to, in a stay at your house, to join in his beautiful morning prayer, or even the short petition before each meal, adapted to any unusual happy circumstance. As you remember I used to make my yearly visit to Keene when the beauty of Spring was at its height, and I can almost hear him quoting, as he preached, from the hymn he

loved to hear sung to the old air we used to call 'Billings's Jordan':—

> "'Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
> Stand drest in living green.'

The enthusiasm in his voice was full of his love for the green fields by the Ashuelot.

"One of those sermons was about Jacob's sleep at Bethel. Most preachers lay stress on the lovely vision of the ladder of angels; but your father dwelt on the thoughts to which Jacob woke. He made us aware that in any of our dwelling-places — however commonplace, however unpretending — we might be living, in truth, in the very house of God. The effect of his words upon me was deep and lasting; and often, in beginning a new chapter of life in some new home, I have prayed, as he taught me that day, that the Lord might be in that place, and that it might be to me none other than the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven."

Before closing this chapter of my father's life as a country minister, in order to give some idea of the sermons which made such a profound impression, I will give some extracts from a few of them.

Here follows part of a New Year's sermon:—

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

"My times are in thy hand." Ps. xxxi, 15.

. . . . . .

The considerations to which I would call your attention are simple and obvious. They relate to our helplessness as regards the future, and to the power which we have over the future. Helpless, and yet mighty, such the new year finds us.

. . . . . .

We are helpless, and yet we are full of power. How is this? God is ready to give us power to meet the events of the future, whatever they may be. Do we not have then at our control the twelve months now beginning? Are they not completely in our grasp? Certainly they are, if we use the power with which God entrusts us.

. . . . . .

If the wishes of our friends for a happy year can be answered, is it not of small moment what are the events that befall us? To be independent of these events is the great blessing which we must desire. It is a very low and a very superficial view to take of the future, to concern ourselves chiefly with the things which may happen to us, and forget to be anxious about the way in which we shall bear these things. How we are to feel, what we are to be, this year, form the important questions, not what

will happen to us. We know that the very enjoyments to which persons have most anxiously looked forward have often strangely disappointed them.

. . . . . .

Whether this coming year be a brighter or a sadder one than you yet have experienced is known only to God. The state of feeling with which you meet these various changes is far more within your control, and must have much more to do with your happiness. We cannot hope every year to be exempt from changes. The tenure of our health is insecure. The love of life will not keep our souls always within these perishing bodies. Affection, although it may keep its beloved objects ever near the soul's eye, cannot always keep them within the sphere of bodily vision.

. . . . . .

How we are prepared to endure illness, want, death or affliction, will be the reflection which will most earnestly engage our attention, not whether we shall be fortunate enough to escape one year longer without being visited by any of these calamities, as we may regard them.

. . . . . .

It is a question too of vastly more moment if whenever we are plunged in sudden affliction we

have faith and strength to sustain us, than whether we be called on to endure sorrow during this particular year or not. You understand me then, that it is the formation and the growth of those principles which in all life's changeful periods and even in eternity will be full of solace and incitement to us, which we ought most to be anxious about, rather than whether our earthly enjoyments be more or less protracted. The principles acquired will keep by us, even though we may not yet need their full force. The enjoyments protracted will be at length interrupted, even though we may not have secured those devout affections and that religious principle which will enable us to hush our murmurs and patiently acquiesce in the will of God. We do not ask then, if we approach the subject with a wise and manly courage, how far we are to be exempted from pecuniary losses, or neglect, or illness, or bereavement, or death, this year, but we ask rather, how well we are fortified against these various troubles, should God see best that *this* be the year of our fiery trial.

So also in reference to the enterprises which we hope to accomplish. It should be of less consequence to us whether our various labors succeed, than whether we succeed in retaining our energy

and our hopefulness. *Some* year, if we live long, will doubtless doom some of our vigorous enterprises to disappointment. Let us not be too anxious to ask whether this year will defeat them or not. We must be more eager to know how well we can bear being disappointed in them; to inquire whether we can persevere in our industry and ardor, even though our favorite plans be checked. For by doing, as well as by enduring, we can make the future our own. It is not gaining just what we wish which gives us strength; it is putting forth the power which we have. The more strength we put forth, the more we receive. He who uses the five talents, to him are sent other five. Would you ask who at the close of this new year we ought to deem the most successful man? I would not point you to the one on whom fortune may never cease to smile, nor to the one whose dwelling is invariably crowned with health and joy. But if when the December snows once more whiten the earth, you can show me one who has struggled bravely against the rebuffs of fortune, who has kept a cheerful heart under the pressure of physical infirmity, who, although less strong in body, less blessed with worldly goods, less abounding in friends than when the year began, has wrought out

for himself from all these discouragements a degree of patience, of trust and of celestial faith which were not his before — if you can show me such an one, you will point to the successful man of the year.

. . . . . .

The man of the year is he who carries with him from month to month, in joy or grief, in wealth or want, in life or in death, a holy ardor, an undimmed faith, a heart full of generous impulses, a mind always turning to God for strength, and always finding it. Such an one is emphatically the man of the year; for while the year is pouring her quiver of arrows upon him he bows his head only in token of submission to a paternal providence. To him these separate years of time become comparatively unimportant as the divisions of his life. There is one great year through whose cycles he is forever passing — the year, the Christian year of life.

. . . . . .

With devout fortitude he is ready to number the mercies of the past. Of the future, he dares only to say, "My times are in thy hand."

. . . . . .

Here is part of a sermon preached in the spring-time: —

"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name."
Ps. CXLII, 7.

. . . . . .

The soul of Nature, seemingly held captive during the wintry months, now that her icy fetters are removed, and the long "hope deferred" of the Spring bursts into promise, seems with one accord out of every opening bud and fragrant blossom and from the glad throat of every bird, to praise God.

Can we ourselves resist altogether the contagion of such joyous influences? Brought out from the dwellings wherein we have been so often immured against our will, into this larger liberty on days when we feel that we can hardly take our eyes from the marvellous transformation which is going on around us, without losing part of its swift history, surely we must feel that in sympathy with the chorus which is everywhere ascending from the world of nature, it is no hard thing for us to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!"

And yet there are persons who in months when great Nature's soul seems still imprisoned find it

easier far to be thankful and cheerful than others do even when all nature seems to be uttering her anthem of restored liberty. So we must consider to what mental imprisonment we often subject ourselves, a captivity which represses the outburst of praise which we ought to offer to God.

First, there is that utter absorption in care which in some persons seems like a prison. The captivity of the mind which is idling away its time, the mind which has not energy enough to take hold of anything may be even worse, but there is also a pressure of worldly cares which is so unresistingly yielded to by other minds, as almost to suggest the idea of an invisible dungeon whose walls gather around the person wherever he goes.

. . . . . .

This prison-house of care far oftener gathers around the steps of those who have little need to be anxious about the morrow. They have accustomed themselves to the whirl of recurring cares which leave them little time for that calm, undisturbed frame of mind in which they can praise God.

A distinguished speaker recently alluded to the intensities of business competition and mercantile absorption in the metropolis where his lot was cast, as affording instances which reminded him of

some beautiful ship bound on a distant voyage with sails all set, moving over the seas swiftly and gracefully, but whose owners were appalled, as she reached her point of destination, to discover that there was one thing which they had forgotten in their haste, and that was her cargo! So, he argued, character, the building up of this immortal fabric, the true growth of all the holier powers of our nature is lost sight of by too many persons as they hurry onward from one scene to another of earthly competition.

And what is just such a condition as this speaker alluded to but one of imprisonment? The man may build his own cell; he may put it as it were on wheels, it may not rest long together on one spot, but it becomes a scene of captivity which confines his sympathies, which chains down his loftier aspirations, which makes him the servant of this inexorable tyrant of care, instead of its master. Are there none of us who have ever felt this thraldom for a space of time long enough to make us ready to say with the psalmist, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name"?

Let us strive so to adjust our cares as to allow them to help us, even to inspire us to praise God as we pursue them from hour to hour, from our

silent hearts, to praise him for the very healthfulness and joy of the cares themselves, rather than to be burdened by them with an excess of perplexity, and a mental confusion which leaves no space for constant, hearty gratitude, and little time for cheerful active sympathy with the social life of our fellow beings.

. . . . . .

What avails it for us that we have solved for ourselves the speculative doubts of the skeptic, only to be visited with the practical doubts of the fastidious and the indolent, only to be wondering where our place is anywhere in this scene of human activities, only to be forever vexed with the questions, "what is there for me to do for anybody, and who is there that would miss me, were I to leave the world?"

There can be no worthy, no genuine gratitude to God for all the privileges of existence, where one does not see them to be privileges; where one is in this sluggish, this inert frame of mind he cannot call upon all that is within him to bless God. One must awake to all the glorious uses and to the immense opportunities of life, would he praise God for its bestowal, and he that has little faith in his own power to serve God or his brethren, is in

spiritual bondage, and *his* prayer may well be, "Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name."

Fourthly, there are others who, perhaps are not self-distrustful enough, yet who bring to pass as little as those who are *too* self-distrustful, and why? Because of envy. The envious behold the position which some other persons occupy, and ask, "Why am I not there? Why could not I be sustaining those duties or receiving those honors as well as he who is there?" How little adapted is such a frame of mind for a spirit of hearty gratitude!

. . . . . .

However high one may rise in this life, if his one reflection be, "Why am I not thought more of or made more of by my fellow beings," he will never attain to that calm, self-poised, earnest frame of spirit in which he so magnifies the opportunities which God has given him, and so looks at everything from the divine point of view rather than the human, as to be full of gratitude for the blessings that he has received.

. . . . . .

When we are not at ease in our own minds, when we wish that something in our outward circumstances might be changed, in the hope that then we

should be truly contented, perfectly happy, we are seeking for true contentment in the wrong direction.

. . . . . .

O, let any person who secretly chafes because he or she does not have more done for them, or because he or she is not more noticed, reflect upon the dungeon which is building in the mind where such thoughts are going on! Let them be eager for a wider liberty than such narrow, such grudging thoughts can afford! Let them rather pray, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name."

. . . . . .

There is no date to mark the following sermon, but as Mr. White left Keene in 1878 it was probably written some years earlier. It was evidently preached to a graduating class of girls. In spite of the fact that it was delivered more than forty years ago, its tone is almost modern enough to satisfy the young suffragists of to-day. Although Mr. White never took any active part in the suffrage movement, he believed in the inherent right of women to vote, and on one occasion he begged a backslider in his own family not to put herself on record as an anti-suffragist.

"Please don't do anything to oppose suffrage," he said. "You belong to the protected class, and you have no way of judging what is best for working-women."

This was so undeniable a fact that the backslider yielded to the parental wish, although she thought his position illogical, for surely one of the chief rights of woman is to do as her conscience bids, and not merely echo the views of a husband or father.

"Covet earnestly the best gifts." 1 Cor. xii, 31.

First, let me charge you, in coveting earnestly the best gifts, to covet the gift of modesty. You will understand that I mean by this word simplicity of thought and manner and dress. True modesty comprehends all this. It does not mean mere shyness or diffidence. True modesty or simplicity sets its rule over the thoughts and aspirations. One who possesses this gift cannot be envious or uncharitable, whereas the person who is merely distrustful or diffident may be so, precisely because she is all the time coveting the attention of other people. She who has true humility of mind, as well as simplicity of manner, escapes a thousand temptations. She secures countless happy moments by means of the spirit of contentment which she thus acquires.

Such an inborn modesty shrinks from that love of show, that desire for creating a sensation which characterizes persons of a different spirit. It acts in harmony with those words in which the Apostle Peter describes the very garb as shaped and colored by the inherent simplicity of the heart, when he says, "whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is, in the sight of God, of great price."

. . . . . .

Covet this gift of modesty, inward and outward, not only for its nobler uses as connected with thought and life, but were it only for the habits of frugality it will encourage in you, in leading you to avoid useless expenditure for mere show.

. . . . . .

Covet, I entreat you, covet earnestly, the best gifts, and among them that gift of modesty which speaks of innate refinement of character, and which is eloquent of true self-forgetfulness, even in the manner and the dress.

Secondly, covet earnestly the gift of industry. The time is approaching when it will be as poor a

designation of the true lady that she has nothing to do, as it is of the true gentleman. The channels of employment which are open to women are constantly multiplying. They need only to do the work well, which they undertake, to prove their fitness for it, and their right to be allowed to undertake it. Yet how stubborn is the force of prejudice! A young woman may nurse rough men in distant hospitals, who are sick with pestilential diseases, as that angel of mercy from the shores of England who earned the blessing of the sick at Scutari, but to use the instruments of surgery or administer medicines is thought to be quite another thing; she may quell the turbulence of rude boys by her firmness and wisdom in the schoolroom, but to lift up her voice in the pulpit and seek to melt the hardened hearts which are so often proof against the words of us ministers, is thought a perilous innovation upon old customs. But without searching out what are still unusual spheres of duty, enough remains, at least in most of our New England towns, for young women to do, who are unwilling to eat the bread of indolence.

. . . . . .

Be you what the world calls more favored, or less favored, — mistaken words oftentimes, for penury

may give a sweet stimulus to exertion which wealth cannot bestow, — be this as it may with you, find something to do. The richest young woman in the land may live to become the most miserably unhappy, from the mere want of anything to which she can give her mind. Doubtless there are hundreds of such who would be actually happier, could they exchange conditions with the ploughman's daughter.

. . . . . .

Thirdly, Covet earnestly the gift of courage. "Courage," you reply, "does he expect us to be soldiers?" Yes, that is just what I expect and desire of you, to be soldiers in the army of life; Christian soldiers in the great moral battle-field of humanity. Covet this sublime gift of moral courage. Humanly speaking, many of our young men might be saved, if *you* had more of this gift. How my heart has ached when I have seen young women offering the wine cup to young men or even receiving it from their hands! I am not in the way of seeing much of these things now, but they go on, in how many towns and cities of our land! These glasses ought to have appropriate emblems upon them, from which fair hands and fair lips might instantly recoil. The hissing, coiling serpent should

form the pedestal for such a glass, "At the last it biteth like a serpent."

. . . . . .

Covet this moral courage which shall make you true to the purer instincts of your nature; it is amply consistent with modesty. Realize how great an influence you can have over the tempted and sinning, as you recoil from the faintest look or word which savors of impurity, and yet while, as sisters or earthly friends, you try to infuse higher principles and better hopes into the minds of the unwary.

. . . . . .

"Covet earnestly the best gifts!" Covet modesty, covet industry, covet courage, covet sympathy, covet reverence, — and then God grant that your way may be soothed to the last by the benedictions of all who know you, that it may be that "path of the just which is as the morning light which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day!"

CHAPTER XII

FROM SIXTY TO NINETY

1881–1911

It is hard to give in a few words an adequate impression of the last third of my father's life which was so uneventful in the stirring facts that make a picturesque chronicle, but so rich in the small happenings that make the charm of everyday life. As the larger cares and duties dropped away from him and he was free to rest among his books and trees, his character mellowed and he gained with years a peculiar charm which was especially felt by young people who perhaps understood him more completely than those nearer his own age.

On one of his visits to Boston, while he was living in Keene, my father characteristically writes: "The weather has been delightfully cool; a good room has been given me here at the Parker House, and hence I can sally forth on my friendly raids upon adjoining towns, much as a spider, from his octagonal web's centre, speeds after any stray fly upon the circumference." And he also says, "To work Newton Centre, Boston, Salem, and Keene

into one day, is more than I could have known how to compass ten years ago. If I live to be sixty, I shall expect to learn how to pack away Brookline too in the same day, but am not quite alert enough for it yet."

These words were curiously prophetic, for in October of the year 1881, when he was sixty years old, my father bought a house in Brookline, Massachusetts, and settled there with his family. In spite of the fact that he was sixty he had lost none of his varied interests, and while he felt that he had earned the right to a few years of leisure, he was always ready to preach for an occasional Sunday when he was asked to do so, and for two years, 1882 and 1883, he preached in the Unitarian pulpit in Sharon, Massachusetts, going over there from Brookline each week on Saturday.

His new home was one that was especially congenial to him, for it combined the advantages of the country with nearness to the city. He had more than two acres of land, much of which was covered with oaks, chestnuts, and evergreen trees, while there was ample room for a vegetable garden and fruit trees. It seemed at the time as if he could hardly live to see the apple and pear and peach trees, which he planted, in their full perfection,

but he was destined to live three years longer than the twenty-seven years which he spent in Keene. Here, in his new surroundings, he lived in his study among the books which he loved so well, often as he used to say, resting himself by changing the language, and turning from German to Latin or Greek.

He was as deeply interested in out-of-door life as when he was in Keene, and delighted in the various birds that built their nests in his trees, and in the gray squirrels that made their home there; while he would often chop wood for exercise, or work in his garden.

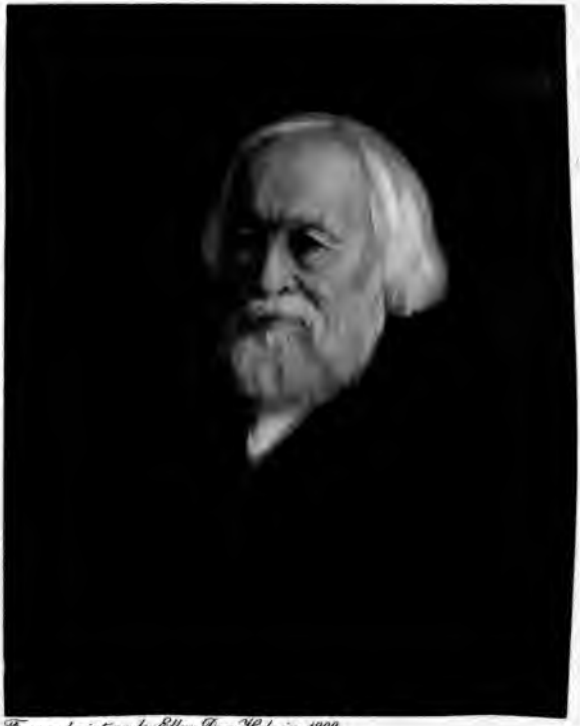
He makes this comment on the "Birds" of Aristophanes: "I find that the bird notes are given as

Tititititititititi and
Tiotiotiotiotio and
Trioto, trioto, etc.

(making you seem to hear them singing after over two thousand years, again)."

After a slight indisposition which kept him in the house for a few days, he thus writes to my mother: —

William Orne White at the age of eighty-eight



From a painting by Ellen Day Hale in 1909

BROOKLINE, *August* 22, 1882.

When you left I lay in my ship-chair in the study, being glad at last of a warm room. I raised my head and stretched my hand, and the first dozen books I encountered were crowded with associations; the Cowper I used to read when fourteen at Exeter, father's gift; Coleridge (once Allan P. Ingersoll's); Milton, Gray, etc., father's gift in my boyhood; the Bible he gave me forty-two years ago; Stanley's "Westminster Abbey," a glance at which took me under those historic arches; "The Ascent of Mont Blanc," which opened Switzerland at a glance, etc.

So I felt that among those silent friends I was "never less alone than when alone," etc., and might say, "My Library (is) Dukedom large enough." But I shall be glad to see the Duchess again, for all that.

Later he wrote, "I especially enjoy, to speak of another book, the merciless and righteous dissection which that furious butcher Bonaparte gets at the hands of Professor Seely."

He writes thus to Dr. Hale concerning Carlyle and Emerson: —

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

To Edward Everett Hale

Milton, Massachusetts,
April 18, 1881.

My dear Edward:—

I thank you for your piquant and stirring notice of Carlyle.

On the whole, he has been more tenderly and gently dealt with by those who sum up his career, than it would appear that he was wont to deal with others.

I have sometimes thought of the "contraband's" prayer; (in connection with T. C.):

"O Lord, let me so lib, dat when I die, I may have manners."

But I doubt T. C.'s having uttered a similar prayer, much as some of those with whom he came in contact might have wished him to.

Don't suspect me now of having ever knocked at his door! (though I should have enjoyed trying the experiment).

But contrast him with R. W. E., and will you put a premium on a man who has been "brought up" as T. C. was, and say, "Would that R. W. E. had been stolen from his cradle and become T. C.'s foster-brother?"

Or take the reverse. What should we have had,

if T. C. had been smuggled into Reverend W. Emerson's nursery and left to grow up with R. W. E.? He'd have given Ralph a bloody nose, I'll be bound, on occasion; but it cannot be that all Carlyle's point and prophecy would have been blunted on the New England family grindstone.

It was better, doubtless, that he should have been nurtured just as he was — all things considered. But remembering "the first true gentleman that ever lived," let us be glad that our New England philosopher has a sweeter approach to him.

It is when the swagger and defiance of a real genius like Carlyle are copied by lesser minds that one feels that he should not be too unqualifiedly praised, and is glad to read with you in your address, "He repelled all those who came to him."

Ever most truly yours,

W. O. White.

In writing to my mother on July 9, 1885, concerning the making of new friends, my father says: "I wonder what fishing of this sort we shall find at Kennebunkport. Will you catch anything in the fresh water region of Stockbridge? . . . 'Keep your friendships in repair' is a good motto for a sexagenarian lady — not by way of adding any dried

specimens to her cabinet, but by catching live ones to hover in and out of her doors."

BROOKLINE,
Wednesday April 7, 1886.

I received the following note: —

"I have asked two or three of our classmates to come and lunch with me on Wednesday (the 7th) at one o'clock to meet Henry Bond who sets out on Friday for his mission among the Indians.

"Yours very truly,
"J. H. ALLEN."

I had half a mind to reply, "Well, I have no objection to your doing so. I hope you'll have a good time."

Then I thought I would say, "I infer that you may expect me."

But on the whole, I concluded to defer any joke until I should meet him. So I said, that I should be glad to go and "help strengthen the *bond* that unites us."

To M. E. W.

July 12, 1889.

I have returned from the sad funeral of Mrs. [Winthrop] Scudder. The church was well filled.

The casket was covered with white. "Jerusalem the Golden" was sung as the mourners left the church. Thirty-eight verses of 1 Cor. xv. were the only Scripture.

The occasion brought before me one, over sixty-eight years ago, that I never saw; and I seemed to see father and his two ten- and twelve-year-old daughters as they left the Court Street house to follow my mother's body to the grave, on returning whence, Dr. Prince christened me in the chamber where, forty years later, father died.

I hope the Scudder infant will have friends raised up for it also, and many to bear testimony in later years to the worth and loveliness of his mother. She will thus retain a powerful influence over his life.

To Dr. James Martineau

Brookline, Massachusetts,
May 28, 1890.

. . . Eliza, in connection with the "Associated Charities" in Boston, has been brought into relation with sundry households who have looked to her for guidance.

Twin boys about nine years old from one of these families, dined with us one day before taking their run about our two acres of woodland and garden.

But lo and behold! it was *we* who were to get a leaf from the book of manners. "Thank you," said a twin, when something was handed him. This was civil and we allowed him "the last word." Whereupon, up speaks the other twin, "Where I live, if anybody says 'Thank you,' we always say, 'Y 're welcome.'" . . .

I have just been reading with delight and admiration, the opening chapter (Nature) in your volume upon "The Seat of Authority in Religion." I am anticipating the being carried still more heavenward, as I proceed. With the ever-widening, ever-deepening glances which we get into the mysteries of the Universe, it would, in one sense, seem a greater boon than ever to have a seat in this grand Temple, even were its doors the hour after, to close upon us, forever. From that point of view, however, we must believe in a doctrine of "Election" which gives us in our brief stay, vastly grander privileges than other centuries enjoyed, and will give our successors far greater opportunities than we have.

How refreshing to view things from your heights of contemplation, and to feel that all such inequalities and disproportions will be reconciled in the great Hereafter! . . .

To M. E. W.

September 6, 1890.

Much of the time I have been closeted alternately with Victor Hugo and James Martineau. I took leave of the former yesterday on the Grève and at the threshold of Notre Dame. So the seven hundred pages are concluded. . . . A wonderful mind — but I would have given his brain a little different twist, and George Eliot's too, if I could have gotten hold of them; leaving all the genius there, but letting it play more agreeably to my fashion, if not to that of the public. . . .

From Dr. J. Martineau, I shall part to-morrow, when his six hundred and fifty-two pages will have been finished.

"Fishes as Fathers" is a curious article that may interest you in the last "Living Age." It does not refer to Hamilton Fish, of New York, or his tribe.

To M. W. T.

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
February 14, 1891.

MY DEAR MARY: —

I have hardly time in which to say how glad I shall be to read the "Life and Letters of John Henry Newman." It is very kind in you to re-

member the Septuagenarian so lavishly, and you and J. B. T. will please accept his warm thanks therefor.

With such examples as Aunt Smith and your father before us, some of us younger ones may be too ready to plead with Father Time for more of his spare days, disbelieving the possible deprivations that might fall to our portion, were the plea listened to.

It is funny, notwithstanding, to be forced to admit, that were I to be impossibly continued to Aunt Smith's age (of ninety-two) and with wits enough to distinguish a kitten from a squirrel — it could not be without seeing in you a septuagenarian niece! This presents such a topsy-turvy bouleversement of my associations with the hop, skip, and jump four year old that I love to recall, that I'll e'en let Father Time lead me along blind-fold, as hitherto, and let slip his grasp when a higher Power bids him, even at the cost of never knowing how gracefully you will poise on your shoulders the weight of seventy years.

Your affectionate uncle,

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE.

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETT
February 16, 1892.

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU, D.D., LL.D.

MY DEAR DR. MARTINEAU, — I thank you warmly for the sight of your handwriting, and the testimony of your remembrance, in the volume of "Home Prayers" which you have been so kind as to send me.

It is very natural that you should speak of yourself as "standing on the last verge of this scene of things," although many a young and vigorous life will be closed before your own, and although you may be spared to us for another decade. Yet, reading the above words in the light of the thought which prompted them, what more touching and tender gift can one bestow, than to take his friend within his innermost shrine, and there, as "the clouds receive" the giver "out of" his "sight," leave him alone with the Great Presence whom the departing one adores afresh as the Eternal indwelling Light and Love?

Such a gift kindles the transcendent vision of one's not being all overlooked by the risen prophet, when the twain shall have "mingled with a more joyful communion where sin and death shall be no more."

It is much to say of this little book that its destiny is to shame many a misgiving spirit (that shall become saturated with its atmosphere), out of any transient hesitations regarding the reality of the "Unseen World." We do see it in a measure in such breathings of the Spirit as your volume enshrines. We see it in some of the utterances of Dr. Channing, and in how many of the aspirations of the great and good of all times. I must maintain that this tone of positive assertion from the very depths of the soul, evokes a thrilling echo from within us. I wonder, whether from the lips of any, within a few hours or days of their known inevitable death, you have happened to hear an exclamation like this, "Formerly, I could say I believe in Immortality, now I know it!"

Such were the words of Rev. George Moore, at the age of thirty-five, to whose death-bed, as his lingering consumption was ending, I was summoned forty-five years ago, in Quincy, Illinois (from St. Louis, where I was temporarily taking Dr. Eliot's place). The tone of that assertion went to a deeper region of my heart, than any utterance that I ever heard from any other death-bed. The words were in response to my inquiry, "How do you feel about immortality now that you find death so near?"

Such an intensity of conviction one might well wish to have in the approach of an hour so solemn. Mr. Moore was one of our own household of faith. A man, from whom I should not have expected the statement, expressed his amazement at the incredulity as to another existence cherished by a relative of his, and then said, "It was enough for me when I saw the new world created by the microscope."

What the microscope was to him, may this blessed little book of yours be to many a soul! May it help to pierce unsounded depths of their own spirits, bringing up to the light a shred of what lay concealed, but which shall make them feel that there is that within them worthy of being kept alive, when the fleshly heart has done throbbing!

With warm regards from us all to you and yours, I remain, as ever,

Respectfully and affectionately yours,

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE.

To E. O. W.

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
November 11, 1892.

The election contradicts my decided wish. I have always concluded that I should not care to

"live my life over again." Now this "result" compels me to live over one of the most unpleasant parts of my life as I am set right back to the Democratic shadows that overcast my sky at the Academy and in College and during my earlier years in Keene. But with ten out of thirteen Republican Congressmen in Massachusetts, instead of only five out of twelve (as at the election two years ago), there is a ray of light hereabouts in the dreary landscape. . . .

In spite of my father's intense partisan feeling in regard to politics, he was sufficiently fair-minded to admire many of Cleveland's acts during his administration.

To E. O. W.

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
November 24, 1892.

I was at Trinity Church in Boston at eleven, to hear a thirty-eight minutes' extempore sermon from Bishop Brooks — from Genesis 1, 25: "And God saw that it was good." Optimism was his subject, and I have seldom or never heard him when he was more eloquent. The huge church was crowded, and with many intent young listeners. And this

on a Thanksgiving Day, when lean churches are proverbial. . . .

You will enjoy your Chicago visit, but you must not expect too much thoughtfulness from the Doctor.[1] I am confident that he exhausted himself in his care of me, and, however well-intentioned can never have so much thought and care to bestow on any future guest. . . .

To Dr. James Martineau

Brookline, Massachusetts,
January 2, 1893.

. . . I lately received a bright letter from your friend Dr. Furness, who, I trust, will enjoy being congratulated on becoming ninety-one in April (being then, however, four months younger than T. T. Stone).

"At the 'great day' it may not only be asked how you lived; — but how long you lived," said our Dr. Noyes over fifty years ago in bidding from the pulpit young graduates look to the well-being of both physical and moral natures. . . .

[There is] a Centenarian — aye — one among us on our very street — who numbers one hundred and two years and not arrayed in borrowed plum-

[1] Dr. E. C. Dudley.

age, though gayly dressed. This lady is a Parrot, brought up by the grandmother of the matron where her home now is. Her vocabulary, though restricted, age has not abbreviated. . . .

To M. E. W.

BROOKLINE, *August* 11, 1893.

Yesterday the thermometer was at 89° in the shade, 91° in Boston (Signal Service thermometer). I read in Sir J. Mandeville, and dipped into Cicero, but as the heat increased I was glad to take refuge with the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," with whom I am still jogging along.

After the sun went down, *I, too*, went down in humble imitation, but only to the Square. The great heat of yesterday seems to have sent a Lynn man walking too far out into the ocean, but I think you cannot have got yesterday on your route conveniently near enough to ocean or river to have followed suit.

The mosquitoes have not yet come back from their camp-meeting at Littleton or Andover, or wherever they are holding it. I'm afraid we shall find when we get there that they have n't "broken camp" at Littleton, but I trust that they have at Andover.

A white morning-glory looks up at your dressing-room window with her blue sisters. Mary H. and Bessie D. are both well and the cat and the catlets.

One of the most encouraging features in the life of my father and mother was the brave and cheerful spirit in which they took the limitations and infirmities which came with advancing years. The following letters written when my father and mother were seventy-two and seventy years old to their brother-in-law, Mr. Caleb Foote, when he was ninety, give the keynote to their outlook on life and foreshadow the way in which they spent their own later years.

My mother writes: —

(*February*) 1893.

. . . Nothing has made the possibility of a prolonged life seem more alluring to me, than your own declaration that at ninety, you are still in love with this beautiful world of ours. In fact, I believe, that if we are happily situated, the longer we live in it, the better we like it. The chief charm of it is the love that goes with us to the end. Of this, you and I have both had a large share. I cannot ask

for anything better than to be as worthy of it, as you are. . . .

And my father says: —

BROOKLINE, *February* 27, 1893.

MY DEAR BROTHER: —

I am glad to have lived to see you rounding out your ninetieth February! The snows of ninety winters! Wrestling, as we have all had to with the snows of this one solitary winter, what an idea it gives one of his pluck, and persistency and energy, who has come off victor in a contest with ninety of 'em!

If your strength were a little "weakened in the way," just as this latter winter was about to fling down his glove in defiance, Old Hiems had to stoop down and pick it up again, and confess that C. F. was too many for him, as he had always been for his numerous predecessors.

And out of the transient weakening which for a while befel you, you have wrung a blessing, inasmuch as by your own chimneyside you have summoned for companionship, your favorite authors around you, instead of following with horse-like tread, Mercury's Machine on Essex St.

So, as you while away the blustering March days

that are coming, will you not receive "Fanny Burney"[1] as a guest who is commissioned, not only to travel back with you to the dawn of the Century, but to convey to you my warmest wishes for you in its twilight; she will echo, with me, the charge of Milton, to which all your past years have borne faithful witness:

> "Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
> Live well: how long or short permit to Heaven."

With love from us all,

I am your affectionate brother,

W. O. WHITE.

To Dr. JAMES MARTINEAU

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
December 23, 1897.

. . . I have entirely agreed with you in what you have said of the inadequacy (and may I add, poverty) of the word "Unitarian," at least as a designation of such as are every moment breathing such a spiritual atmosphere as you are. Nor do I think the word Trinitarian a just or fortunate appellation for those believers who differ from us. My father (one hundred and twenty-one years old were he in the flesh), an earnest Unitarian, always

[1] With good luck, she hopeth to reach you on the 28th of February.

thought that "Christian" would have been better; he doubtless felt the want of *inclusiveness* in the word "Unitarian."

To Dr. James Martineau

February 12, 1898.

Well, we found the Jowett volumes very interesting reading, as we since have the "Life and Letters of Tennyson." (How I wish T. had shared your sentiments regarding tobacco! Pipe, pipe, pipe, on almost every page, and all the pipers cannot expect to live as long as he and Carlyle did.)

Here is one sentence which, to me, more than almost aught else, marks the inherent greatness of the man, vast in humility (vol. 1, p. 311): "I should infinitely rather feel myself the most miserable wretch on the face of the earth, with a God above, than the highest type of man, standing alone."

I somehow can hardly help fancying that there are people who do not enjoy looking up to what is higher than they are; and possibly there are those of such conceit as hardly to imagine anything higher than themselves. And yet, in this grand burst of prose Tennyson does but echo the old refrain, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

This thirst for what is higher and purer, and for

unattained opportunities of pursuing it, as evidenced in the lives of spiritual experts; witness Henry More, Jeremy Taylor, Channing, and saints of a still elder day, seems, in itself, an assurance that the thirst shall be satisfied.

In the year 1898, when Mr. White was seventy-seven years old, he was walking home after dark in the late winter afternoon, when he was attacked, not far from his own house, by a man who gave him a heavy blow on the head. My father staggered back, but called out in such a powerful voice that he saw his antagonist's shadowy form vanishing into the distance. My father came back and quietly told us what had happened as we were sitting around the supper-table. He was confined to the house for a few days, but as soon as he was able to go out again, he once more began to take his daily walk after dark. The family all remonstrated with him, but to no avail.

"I cannot accept life at the price of fear," he said.

It was evident that he did not feel his age, for on his eightieth birthday he said at intervals, "Eighty years old," as if it were a great joke; and he added, "I never was so happy in my life."

In the year 1900, the marriage of his younger daughter [1] took much of the brightness and life out of the household, and on June 2, 1903, came the great sorrow of the death of his wife. But even then, his faith never wavered, and those who came to him full of sorrow over their own loss in her death, and expecting to find him overwhelmed with grief, went away feeling that it was he who had cheered and comforted them.

"People are commiserating me on account of the death of my wife," he once said, "and I tell them it is a wonderful thing that I have had her companionship for over fifty years."

To be privileged to share the life of a spirit so courageous and so full of faith and absolute belief that "all things work together for good to those who love God," was a constant incentive to courage, while the play of his own individual humor, which was a never-ending surprise, gave his companionship a piquancy and freshness which is more apt to be the accompaniment of youth than of extreme old age. Indeed, he always kept the vivid interest in all that was going on in the world that makes its possessor continue to be a welcome companion to the young. The young people who

[1] Rose White, married to Dr. D. W. Nead, January 29, 1900.

came to stay at the house were always fascinated with him. I do not quite know what constituted the freemasonry that existed between him and those who were young enough to be his grandchildren, but they all were drawn to him. I think the secret lay in his perennial youth, and an entire unconsciousness and failure to conform to a set rule. His point of view was always spontaneous and therefore frequently surprising. Once when he was urged by an acquaintance to do something that he did not care to do he gravely asserted to the family that it was a good rule sometimes to do things to please one's self. On another occasion I came through the hall just behind him and heard him talking to himself. He had his watch in his hand and was comparing it with the always-to-be-depended-upon hall clock. "You are a lying devil," he remarked to his watch, and then looked guilty like a naughty schoolboy when he realized that this remark had been overheard.

He delighted in reading aloud, and every evening, he read aloud for two or three hours on the stretch. This was another thing that always astonished the young guests, for he read without glasses, as this was easier for his near-sighted eyes. He had a vigorous voice, and a dramatic way of reading the

things he liked, but nothing could have been more listless and uninteresting than the way in which he read an article or story that did not appeal to him.

He made friends in the neighborhood with the conductors and motormen and often found occasion to advise them against drinking or the use of tobacco. His dislikes were unconquerable, and one of the aversions of his later life was a detestation of automobiles. Once when invited by a young relative to go on a trip which he would very much have liked to take, he shook his head.

"No," he said, "I have said too many things against automobiles. I would n't dare to go in one for fear it would take its revenge."

He continued to read the newspapers to himself almost from end to end, and was keenly interested in politics up to the very last. He was as vehement in his denunciations of those with whom he did not agree as at any time of his life. When I hear my friends say they are glad the old people belonging to them died before the beginning of this frightful European War, I sometimes wish my father's ninety years might have covered this period. I know how intensely he would have felt, and yet with what acute interest he would have watched every move in the struggle. I can almost hear the

exclamations that would have fallen from his lips. As in the period of the Civil War his voice would have given no uncertain sound: but in spite of the shock to his faith in human nature he would have had a sturdy belief that the right would prevail at last, that would have been very bracing to his friends. It was happier for him, however, that his later years should have been unshadowed by so black a cloud.

It is a comfort to remember how much pleasure he had in the enjoyment of Nature during those later years. The wish expressed in a letter of June, 1847, was realized: "I hope to have a month or two in every summer to play outdoors in, on stages, or steamboats, or in the mountains."

In the spring of 1900 he went with friends by steamer from Washington to Norfolk, Virginia, to see an eclipse of the sun, and in the autumn of 1902, when he was eighty-one years old, he accepted an invitation to visit a niece in Canada. It was my good fortune to be his companion on the journey, a part of which he had taken with his father sixty-five years earlier. I remember how, as we were flying through the dark night on our way to Montreal, he talked about immortality in words so inspiring and vivid that I would give much if I had the verbal

memory to recall them. His interest in Montreal could hardly have been greater when he first went there as a boy of sixteen, and the days he spent at Brockville with his niece, Mrs. George T. Fulford, and her husband, gave him the keenest pleasure, one of the attractions being an afternoon's cruise in their yacht among the beautifully wooded islands on the St. Lawrence.

He spent several summers at the mountains and others at the seashore, and wherever he went, whether to Whitefield, Lunenburg, Bartlett, or Nahant, he carried his enthusiastic love of walking and driving and his enjoyment of the birds and flowers.

He continued his walks until he had reached an advanced age, and even in the last summer before his fatal illness he still took his favorite walk to Jamaica Pond, although he was too lame to go there alone, and the ten minutes that it had once taken him was then stretched to nearly an hour.

On January 20, 1910, he came down with pneumonia and he was not able to walk again, although he lived until February 17, 1911. He was never again his vigorous self, but he recovered sufficiently to be able to read, and in the summer he was

wheeled out a few times as far as Jamaica Pond. His last trip was taken there in September, 1910, when it seemed as if the swans, which had interested him so much, knew that it was his last visit and had assembled to bid him farewell, for more than twenty of them were drawn up at the edge of the pond.

As has been seen more than once, my father had always taken a great interest in old people and all through the last hard year of his life he had a longing to reach his ninetieth birthday. It seemed as if it was just unusual strength of will that enabled him to see that day, for on February 12, his birthday, he had a second attack of pneumonia, and only lived five days.

The afternoon of his funeral there was a snowstorm which fell gently on his last resting-place and made the final service in that spot, in the Walnut Hills Cemetery, a scene of peace and inspiration.

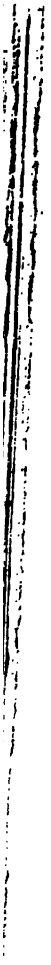
The keynote of his life was dauntless courage and faith, and he expected those about him to have the same courageous outlook on life. He once said to a member of his family, "I never have any fear about your future, for whatever trials may come to you, you will have the courage to meet them."

WILLIAM ORNE WHITE

To have shared for so many years the companionship of one who held this gallant philosophy of life, is so great a privilege that it has seemed to necessitate the sharing it with others.

THE END

INDEX



INDEX

Adams, John Quincy, Jr., eulogy on Madison, 32.
After Noontide, quoted, 221–24.
Allan, J. H., 57, 58.
Allen, F. E., 171.
Allen, Joseph Henry, 63, 254.
Annapolis, Nova Scotia, 72, 73.

Baillie, Joanna, 58.
Barstow, Dr., Orthodox minister at Keene, 197, 198.
Bartlett, Gen. W. F., 179, 180.
Bartol, Rev. George M., 63.
Bell, Dr., of Edinburgh, 56.
Bellows, Dr. Henry W., 140.
Bemis, Dr., Boston dentist, 125.
Bigelow, Dr. Henry J., 55, 56.
Boies, Charles A., 139.
Bond, Henry F., 51, 52, 53, 63, 254.
Brooks, Phillips, 262.
Buchanan, Pres. James, 120.

Canker-worm, the, 108, 109.
Carlyle, Thomas, 252, 253.
Catbird, song of, 211.
Channing, Edward T., 36, 49.
Chapin, William, 152.
Christian Register, 168, 169.
Civil War, the, 143–83.
Clay, Henry, 105.
Commemoration Day at Harvard (1865), 178–80.
Craigie, Mrs., 45.
Crow, Mr., of St. Louis, 80, 81.

Dartmouth College, 133, 188.
Delaware Water Gap, 92, 93.
Draft riots, in New York, 161, 162; in Boston, 162.
Drummond, Mr., Scotch acquaintance of Mr. White's in Sicily, 57, 58.
Dudley, Dr. E. C., 263.
Dwight, Wilder, 153, 154.
Dwight, Mrs. William. *See* White, Elizabeth Amelia.

Eastport, Maine, 66–71, 78.
Education, some essentials of, 210.
Eliot, William G., 73.
Elliot, Arthur, 152.
Elliot, James, 152.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 37, 90, 252, 253.
Emery, Mary, 34.
Everett, Edward, 46–48.
Exeter Academy, 15, 18.

Faulkner, Mrs. F. A., letter to, 228.
Felton, Cornelius C., 49.
Fire, attraction of, 75.
Fiske, F. S., 145, 146.
Foote, Caleb, 265–67.
Foote, Mrs. Caleb. *See* White, Mary Wilder.
Foote, Henry Wilder, 102.
Force, Gen. Manning F., 179.
Forrest, Edwin, 37.

INDEX

French, Orren, 140.
Frothingham, Octavius Brooks, 63.
Fulford, Mrs. George T., 274.

Goodall, Thomas, 177.

Hale, Edward Everett, 90; as a preacher, 123; letters to, 167, 168, 226, 252.
Hale, Ellen Day, 230.
Hale, George S., 96.
Hale, Lucretia P., 104.
Harding, Chester, 73; death, 182, 183.
Harding, Margaret Eliot, 48, 73, 83, 89; letters to, 74, 77–80, 81, 82, 87. *See also* White, Mrs. William Orne.
Harrington, Professor, of Wesleyan University, 200, 201.
Harvard College, 28; disturbances at, 30, 31; Freshman courses, 31; examinations, 35, 36; Commemoration Day, 178–80.
Haynes, "Great" Uncle, 172.
Haynes, Thomas, 173.
Higginson, Mrs. F. J., 128.
Higginson, Hetty, 11.
Higginson, Col. T. W., 63, 161.
Hill, Pres. Thomas, 63.
Horne, John, 2.
Hurd, Frank, 15, 16.
Hurd, Rev. Isaac, 15.

Incendiarism in Cambridge, 45, 46.
Ingersoll, Dr., 149.
Insect pests, 108, 109.

Keene, New Hampshire, 96–142, 197–219, 227, 228.
Kemble, Fanny, 90.
Kilburn, Mr., 204.
Knapp, Frederick N., 140.

Latimer, Bishop Hugh, sermon by, 207, 208.
Leach, Rev. Mr., of Keene, 202–04.
Lincoln, Abraham, second inaugural, 170; death, 173–76; estimate of, 174, 175.
Lind, Jenny, 93, 94.
Longfellow, Henry W., 46, 49.
Lowe, Martha Perry, 129.
Lowell, James Russell, 45.

Mammoth Cave, 85–87.
Martineau, James, 62, 192; sends Mr. White a hymn-book, 208; friendship with, 220, 221; *Home Prayers*, 259–61; letters to, 215, 255, 259, 263, 267, 268.
Methodist Conference, 198–200.
Minor, T. T., assistant surgeon, 161.
Money, raising, for a church, 205.
Moore, Rev. George, 260, 261.
Moors, Rev. John F., 63.
Mount Willard, view from, 127.
Musgrave, Thomas, 151.

Natural Bridge, 88.
Nead, Dr. D. W., 270.
Niagara Falls, 112–14.
North Conway, New Hampshire, 123–26.

INDEX

Orne, Dwight, 153.
Orne, Eliza, mother of Mr. White, 1, 3, 5; twice married, 4.
Orne, William, 2.

Palfrey, Dr. John G., sermon by, 29.
Paul, Mrs., New Brunswick Indian, 151.
Peabody, Andrew Preston, 92.
Peabody, Francis H., 129.
Peabody, Rev. William B. O., 6.
Peabody, Mrs. W. B. O. *See* White, Amelia.
Peace, of which the angels sang, 160.
Peirson, Edward B., 28.
Peirson, Ellen, 129.
Peirson, Harriet, 129.
Phillips, Rev. George, 61.
Pickering, Col. Timothy, 8, 9, 209.
Putnam, Dr. George, 180.

Renouf, Dr. Edward A., Episcopal rector at Keene, 198.
Resignation, Christian, 119, 120.
Reynolds, Rev. Grindall, 63.
Rogers, Emily (Mrs. John H. Morison), 6, 111.
Rogers, Ruth Hurd (Mrs. Daniel A. White), 6, 7.
Ropes, Abigail (Mrs. William Orne), 2, 3.
Ropes, Judge, of Salem, 2.
Ropes Memorial, 2, 3.

St. Helena, 53, 54.
St. Louis, Mo., 76, 78, 79.
Scudder, Mrs. Winthrop S., 254.
Sewall, Rev. Henry, 61.
Seymour, Horatio, 162.
Shepherd, Perkins, 56.
Simpson, Bishop Matthew, 198, 200.
Slavery, 121, 144.
Slaves, sale of, 84.
Sparks, Jared, 49.
Stage-coach, traveling by, 16, 29.
Switzerland, 54, 223.

Taylor, Edward ("Father Taylor"), 64.
Telegraph, the, 98.
Temperance, Mr. White's interest in, 91, 92, 110, 206, 214.
Tennyson, Alfred, 268.
Thayer, Dr., 149, 152.
Tinkham, Mr., of Eastport, 68, 69, 70.
Twitchell, Dr. George B., 152.
Tyndall, John, 215.
Typographical errors, 168, 169.

Umbrellas, "gobbling," 187, 188.
Unitarian, inadequacy of the word, 267, 268.
Unitarians, and the New Testament, 75; considered heretics, 197.

Van Schalkwyck, Mary Wilder, first wife of Judge White, 5.
Very, Jones, 49.

War, a hard-featured nurse, 159.
Ward, G. A., 61.
Ware, Rev. Henry, 37, 61.
Watertown, old burying ground in, 42.
Webster, Daniel, death of, 105.

West Newton, Mass., 89–95.
Wetmore, Mrs. William (afterward Mrs. Daniel A. White), 3, 4.
White, Amelia (Mrs. W. B. O. Peabody), 5, 6, 73.
White, Judge Daniel Appleton, 1, 7, 9; married, 4, 5, 6; death, 141; letters to, 13, 21, 25, 35, 36, 43, 44, 46, 51, 63, 66, 68, 69, 72, 80, 90, 92, 97, 98, 105, 106, 108–12, 115, 116, 121–26, 129–39, 165.
White, Daniel Appleton, son of W. O. W., 141.
White, Eliza Orne, 175; letters to, 186–96, 206–13, 261, 262.
White, Elizabeth Amelia (Mrs. William Dwight), 4, 5, 73.
White, Henry Orne, 6.
White, Mrs. John (Elizabeth Haynes), grandmother of W. O. W., 10, 11.
White, Mary Wilder (Mrs. Caleb Foote), 5, 60; death of, 128–30, 131, 132.
White, Rose (Mrs. D. W. Nead), 270.
White, Ruth Hurd, wife of Daniel A. White, 6; death of, 214; letters to, 7, 34, 38, 66, 68, 90, 93, 97, 107, 111, 116, 120, 124, 138, 145, 148, 153, 162, 163–66, 170, 173–80, 181, 182, 200, 213, 214.
White, William (1635), 2.
White, William Orne, born, 1; ancestry, 2–5; childhood, 6–14; sensitive and helpful, 8, 9; mischievous, 10; humorous, 11; sent to Dame School, 11; at boarding-school, 12, 13; homesick, 13; at Phillips Exeter Academy, 15–27; his reading, 18, 22; fond of walking, 20, 22, 42, 78, 127, 274; Sunday occupations, 22, 25; goes on fishing cruise, 24; writes essay comparing Homer and Virgil, 24, 26, 27; enters Harvard, 28; Freshman courses, 31; examinations, 35, 36; trip to Quebec and Montreal, 38–40; Sophomore studies, 40, 41; Junior exhibition, 43; visits in Springfield, 44; class orator, 48; his Class Day spread, 48 *n.*; foreign trip, 51–60; in St. Helena, 53, 54; in Switzerland, 54; in Italy, 55; ill at Alexandria, 55, 56; trip through Sicily, 57, 58; in Cambridge, England, 60; enters Harvard Divinity School, 61; his first pastorate, Eastport, Maine, 66–71, 78; trip through the provinces, 71–73; goes to St. Louis, 73; in a steamboat accident, 74, 75; describes St. Louis, 76; enjoys his profession, 78; on seeing slaves sold, 83, 84; returns East, 84–88; visits Mammoth Cave, 85, 86; at Natural Bridge, 88; married, 89; in West Newton, Mass., 89–95; interested in temperance, 91, 92, 110, 206, 214; visits Delaware Water Gap, 92.

Called to Keene, New Hampshire, 96; becomes a member of the School Committee, 98, 111, 112; on the business reverses of

a friend, 100, 101; his political attitude, 105; at Niagara Falls, 112–14; preaches on Christian resignation, 119, 120; his eldest child christened, 121; journey to North Conway, 123; a strenuous drive, 124–26; influence of his sister Mary's death, 128–32; receives Encyclopædia Britannica from his parish, 137, 138; and an increase of salary, 139; takes an interesting horseback journey, 139, 140; death of his father, 141, 142; attitude in the Civil War, 143, 144, 150; birthday surprise party given by his parish, 148, 149; moved by enlistments among his parishioners, 152; a Thanksgiving Day sermon in wartime, 154–57; a Christmas sermon, 157–60; a parish reception, 163, 164; social "complications," 166, 167; a railroad delay, 170, 171; on Abraham Lincoln, 173–76; Commemoration Day, 178–80; organizes a Freedmen's Association, 181; his sympathy with children, 184; a good story-teller, 184; disliked dogs, 185; letters to his little daughter, 186–96; relations with brother ministers, 197–202; account of a Methodist Conference, 198–201; preaches a series of doctrinal sermons, 202, 203; building a new church, 204, 205; death of his stepmother, 214.

Asks church for a year's leave of absence, 216; goes to Europe for a year, 220; friendship with James Martineau, 220, 221; in Paris, 221, 222; in Switzerland, 223; in Scotland, 224, 225; returns to Keene and resigns, 225, 226; strong attachment to the people there, 227–30; his sermons and prayers, 230–47; believed in equal suffrage, 242; settles in Brookline, 249; among his books, 251; an intense Republican, 262; brutally attacked, 269; marriage of his younger daughter, 270; death of his wife, 270; some characteristics of his last years, 269–74; his death, 274.

Letters from: to his father, 13, 21, 25, 35, 36, 43, 44, 46, 51, 63, 66–70, 72, 80, 90, 92, 97, 98, 105, 106, 108–12, 115, 116, 121–26, 129–39, 165; to his stepmother, 7, 34, 38, 66, 68, 90, 97, 107, 111, 116, 120, 124, 138, 153, 163–66, 170, 173–80, 181, 182, 200, 213, 214; to Miss Harding, 74, 77–80, 81, 82, 87; to his wife, 94, 99, 100, 118, 127, 141, 145, 161, 162, 170, 172, 198, 204, 251, 254, 257, 264; to Eliza Orne White, 186–96, 206–13, 261, 262; to Mrs. F. A. Faulkner, 228; to Caleb Foote, 266; to Henry Wilder Foote, 102; to Edward Everett Hale, 167, 168, 226, 252; to Mrs. F. J. Higginson, 128; to James Martineau, 215, 255, 259, 263, 267, 268.

INDEX

White, Mrs. William Orne, letter about Jenny Lind, 93, 94; first impressions of Keene, 96, 97; describes their first parish party in Keene, 104; her interests and activities, 205, 206; *After Noonside* quoted, 221–24; death, 270; letters to, 74, 77–79, 81, 82, 87, 94, 99, 100, 118, 127, 141, 145, 161, 170, 173, 198, 204, 251, 254, 257, 264; letters from, to her mother-in-law, 145, 148, 162, 180.
Wordsworth, William, 59, 60.

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